BBC

goodfood

Middle East

December 2017
DHS15 | QR15

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Festive flavours

Celebrate the season

- Make-ahead starters
- Turkey 3 ways
- Homemade, edible gifts

Christmas baking



Malted milk melting snowman cake



Best mince pies ever



Golden snowflake & meringue cake

Crispy-skinned roast turkey with lemon & garlic

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Welcome to December!



It's that time of year again, when it's good to have a selection of crowd-pleasing recipes up your sleeve. With friends and family popping over to share festive joy, Christmas parties galore and more lined up, this month's issue is all about recipes that'll successfully feed a house full.

From succulent, crispy-skinned roast turkey, Parmesan roasties, hazelnut and mustard carrots with a hearty drizzle of turkey and chestnut gravy or sourdough bread sauce to finish, to orange marmalade glazed roast duck with smoky sweet root veg and black pepper hasselback potatoes, we have a mouthwatering line-up of festive recipes to enjoy. And that's not forgetting desserts.

Go traditional with our easiest-ever mince pies, or get creative with the 'Christmas orange and cranberry compote cake your way' on page 104, which includes three fantastic ways to decorate the exterior of white chocolate cream cheese frosting.

For further inspiration, check out our website, ***bbcgoodfoodme.com***, where we have hundreds of recipes to choose from for all occasions, whether it be Christmas Eve dinner, Christmas Day lunch, Boxing Day comforts (bubble and squeak at the ready), or a NYE feast to remember.

This issue also reveals the BBC Good Food Middle East Awards 2017 winners – as voted by you, the public. Over 80,000 people voted for their favourites this year, and the winners were awarded at a glittering ceremony at The Ritz Carlton, Dubai last month (p24) – all thanks to you!

Enjoy cooking up a festive storm in the kitchen this magical month. Wishing you and yours the happiest of holidays!

See you in 2018,

Sophie

Editor



FREE with this issue
The Festive Food Guide 2017 – for all your dining out needs over the holidays

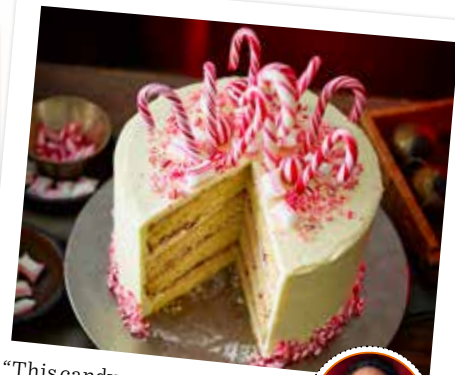
WHAT WE'RE LOVING!



"This super-easy sticky glazed turkey crown is sure to make Christmas Day a breeze in the kitchen," says sales executive, Liz.



Sales director, Michael says: "This gravadlax with celeriac & fennel salad makes for a great starter during any festive meal with friends."



"This candy cane cake tastes great, and makes for a great festive decoration on the table," says graphic designer, Froilan.

BBC goodfood Middle East

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FOUNDER CPI MEDIA GROUP
Dominic De Sousa
(1959-2015)

PRINTED BY
Emirates Printing Press LLC, Dubai

PUBLISHED BY

CPI MEDIA GROUP
CPIMEDIAGROUP.COM
Celebrating 25 years of media in the Middle East

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BBC Worldwide UK Publishing
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V Suitable for vegetarians.
❄ You can freeze it.
Not suitable for freezing.
Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make.
A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry.
More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks.
Low fat 12g or less per portion.
Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.
Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.
Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids.

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving.
Vit C Iron Omega-3 Calcium Folate Fibre
Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients.
GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten.
Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:
P Contains pork.
Contains alcohol.

gf YOUR SAY

We love hearing from you!

STAR LETTER



I started my print subscription of BBC Good Food Middle East only four months ago. Before that, I got my recipes and other information from the internet. Why did I decide to get the print edition? Simply, I wanted to have all the information and more at home, that I can go back and forth to - also, it has become my collection which I can share to my family back home in the Philippines. Whenever I go home for vacation, my family looks forward to my print collection of BBC Good Food ME issues, as opposed to the usual chocolates and fancy 'pasalubong' (giveaways). But, the best thing about it is the bonding it brings. Whenever we decide to try a new GF recipe, we are cooking as a family. I think I made the right choice getting the subscription! Food and family blends perfectly well with BBC GF ME!

Emilio Esclabanan



BBC Good Food Middle East inspires me to get into the kitchen, experiment, eat healthily and even more importantly have a huge amount of fun even after a long and stressful day at work. The vibrant photography, easy to follow recipes and writing style never fail to inspire me!

Caroline Rowe



I enjoy the recipes section the most about BBC Good Food ME, especially the baking recipes. As a beginner in baking, I find the recipes to be foolproof with easy to follow instructions with no fancy ingredients or techniques. I have tried a couple of them and they were a big hit with my family and friends. Keep up the good work!

Yasmeen Ahmed

WIN!

The Winner of the Star letter receives a **1,000 AED shopping voucher from Tavola,** the leading retailer for your favorite brands of kitchen products, tableware and bakeware. Shop for Alessi, WMF, Staub, Zwilling Henckels, Vitamix, Wilton and much more in our stores across the GCC and online: **www.tavolashop.com**

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Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com
with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of BBC Good Food ME!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on: **@bbcgoodfoodme**

Or, you could write to us at: The Editor, BBC Good Food Middle East. Grosvenor Business Tower, Barsha Heights, Office 804 PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.

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NEWS *nibbles*

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



Catering made easy



Are you hosting a party over the festive season and are on the lookout for a catering service that offers good food, spotless service and a refined approach? Well, there's a new high-quality caterer in Dubai called Posh Platters, that has launched a brand new 'party season' menu that can be adapted to suit different tastes and events. From winter salads to hot mezze and yummy bite-size desserts, the extensive menu combined with immaculate service and décor options, you can sit back and enjoy your own party for a change. As a full-service catering and décor service provider, the brand ensures its customers a novel experience each time. A new twist is added to old favourites – without compromising on quality, taste and freshness. For more information see poshplatters.ae.

DUBAI WINTER FESTIVAL

Gather your friends and family for four days of festive fun as the Dubai Winter Festival returns to Dubai Media City Amphitheatre from December 6 - 9 for everything you love about Christmas all in one place. With new events for 2017 including a Party Garden VIP area for the grown-ups, the launch of Dubai's largest pub quiz, and a talent contest to search for the UAE's most talented young star, Dubai Winter Festival is guaranteed to get you into the festive spirit whatever age you are. Santa will be taking time out of his busy schedule to make a special appearance at the Santa's Grotto, kids can make their own edible gingerbread house in the fun family workshop led by French Bakery, have fun playing in real snow in the Haribo Snow Play Zone where snow will fall on the hour every hour, and the Splash N Party Kid's Zone will keep the children entertained with activities including arts & crafts, zip line, bungee jump, face painting and more. For tickets, visit dubaiwinterfestival.com.

THE BEST BITES

Text: SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SUPPLIED

Fort Island's Festive Market



If you're looking to get into the Christmas spirit this month, Madinat Jumeirah will welcome back its annual Festive Market to Fort Island from December 15 – 27. Nestled within the Madinat Jumeirah Resort, the Festive Market will have all the touches of a traditional German Festive Market, complete with fun entertainment for the whole family. There will be rides on an abra boat with Santa, dozens of slides and games including a two-lane bungee jump for teenagers, a North Pole train for the little ones and a giant snow ball zone for children of all ages. Expect delights like roasted chestnuts and seasonal beverages from multiple food and beverage outlets serving festive treats from around the globe across the expansive Arabian resort. The market will be open daily from 3pm - 1am on weekdays and 12pm - 1am on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. For more information, see Jumeirah.com.

Festive foodie gifts



Holiday Thermal Mugs by Kate Spade – make mornings a little merrier with these on-the-go thermal mugs from Kate Spade New York; accented with a festive illustration. The bpa-, phthalate- and lead-free interior means you can sip and savour safely.



Expert&milk by Nespresso – the perfect Christmas deserves the perfect coffee moment. The Expert&milk has a fully integrated milk frother to indulge milk lovers with a wide variety of recipes. Priced at Dhs1,425 from Nespresso stores across the UAE.



Tub of Butter Gift Hampers - artfully designed crates, lavishly filled with a selection of gourmet items from the Tub of Butter kitchen. Select a ready-made crate or design one yourself to your own budget and to best suit the recipient. Gift Hampers start from Dhs50. See tubofbutter.com.



Rudolph Red Velvet Cake from SugarMoo – give the gift of deliciousness this Christmas with a festive treat from SugarMoo. This cake is available in both 6 and 8-inch, in SugarMoo's signature red velvet oreo crunch flavour. Priced at Dhs220 and available to order online at sugarmoo.com.



Bateel Hampers and Gift Boxes – these gourmet hampers from Bateel are completely customisable. Simply choose from a range of packaging and fill with a bespoke selection of gourmet products, from the finest Bateel dates and chocolates to festive cakes and sparkling juices to winter jams and teas to create the ultimate foodie's dream present. Alternatively, opt for one of many gift boxes available from the festive range. Available from Bateel stores across the UAE.



Marks & Spencer Christmas Tree Tin – a musical Christmas tin; listen to a tune and enjoy mini Christmas tree shaped shortbread stored inside. Priced at Dhs85 from Marks & Spencer stores across the UAE.



Gentleman's Hardware Portable BBQ – Spinneys has welcomed a selection of Gentleman's Hardware products to its supermarkets, which make for perfect gifts for men this Christmas. From handy barbecuing tools to quality steak knives, this range is for the guys who like to cook. The portable BBQ is priced at Dhs400, from Spinneys.

INTRODUCING:

the Smart Oven Pro by Breville



A perfect gift for the cook who desires a countertop oven that bakes the perfect pizza, delicious cookies, toasts evenly and roasts succulent meat, the Smart Oven Pro with Element IQ is an essential tool, boasting a convection setting that reduces cooking time by up to 30%. With Element IQ – five independent quartz heating elements move the power where it's needed most, above and below the food. Each element adjusts automatically for the setting you choose, to deliver the right cooking temperature at the right time ensuring the precise cooking process for the meal you are creating. The Smart Oven Pro by Breville features an interior oven light to keep an eye on your cooking and the pre-set cooking functions include toast, crumpet, bake, roast, grill, pizza, cookies, reheat, warm and slow cook. Available from Betterlife in Mall of the Emirates and Mirdiff City Centre, priced at Dhs1,949.



KITCHEN UPDATE

In approach to New Year, Hacker Kitchens has released its new 2018 kitchen ranges. All of the new styles are specifically designed with the Middle East and Asia Pacific regions in mind - Hacker makes the world's only tropicalized kitchen. These are specially sealed and treated with an anti-fungal layer during the manufacturing process, using a sealant that expands and stretches with temperature. This makes the cabinets less penetrable by moisture, therefore increasing durability. Highlights of the new range include the pictured 'Aquamarine' range, which brings a calm yet stylish theme to the home and works very well with greys, stainless steel and chrome. Hacker Kitchens typically start from Dhs130,000. For more information see hacker.ae.



GO RETRO

Blend design and modern technology in your home kitchen with SMEG's pastel blue blender. At breakfast create a healthy fruit and yogurt smoothie after a workout to revitalise yourself, or at a lunch use the blender to prepare a quick and simple soup. SMEG's retro style blender boasts three pre-set functions: ice crush, smoothie and pulse with four speeds. The blender comes with a 1.5L BPA-free tritan jug, that aids the blender to beautifully blend ingredients of different textures to perfection to accompany you through the day. Priced at Dhs980 from betterlifeuae.com.

Safely delivered

Putting safety first, Freedom Pizza, the home-grown UAE pizza delivery company, has announced a 45% reduction in motorcycle accidents with their drivers in the past eighteen months. In late 2015 Freedom Pizza launched the Safety Delivered campaign spearheading safety amongst the UAE roads, which continues to prove to be a huge success.

To ensure safety was put first, Freedom Pizza's 125 delivery drivers attended a driver safety training workshop with Ride Safe UAE during the last quarter of 2016, which contributed to the reduction of accidents of its drivers in 2017. In addition to the training, drivers were issued with a DOT/ECE certified Life Helmet, safety boots, new bikes and a new uniform, with full CE rated body armour, which would protect them in the result of an accident.



Book reviews FIONA FORMAN | Skinted v minted ANNA LAWSON



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Flavours of the *month*

Here is what's hot and happening around town this month.

New on the block

Ravioli & Co., DIFC

Pasta hotspot, Ravioli & Co., has officially opened its doors in Burj Daman, DIFC. The rustic, authentic trattoria is a homegrown licensed concept founded by close friends. Tortellini, tagliatelle, gnocchi, and of course ravioli, all make up some of the fresh pasta that are available at Ravioli & Co. Specialising in fresh pasta made daily by an in-house sfoglina (pasta lady), the new restaurant boats rustic décor of old flooring, aged wooden tables, exposed ceiling, metal wire lights, antique accessories and an open kitchen. From Italian breads such as focaccia and grissini baked in-house to fresh handmade pasta, Ravioli and Co. boasts of a genuine Italian experience. *Call 04-2411616 or see ravioliandco.ae.*

Larte Dubai, Dubai Design District

Following the flagship concept in Milan, Larte Dubai is a new Italian opening that offers an all-day dining experience combining a counter service 'caffé' and full-service 'trattoria'. Living by the philosophy of 'bello, buono e ben fatto', meaning 'the beautiful, the good and the well-made', the concept is a model example of simple, honest Italian excellence and hospitality. The menu features both traditional Italian dishes and lighter Mediterranean flavours. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, guests can choose from a selection of small Antipasti plates perfect for sharing or more substantial main courses. The menu offers a wide selection of vegetarian, vegan, seafood and meat options. *Call 04-2400441 or see larte.ae.*

Jebel Ali Recreation Club, Jebel Ali Village

Jebel Ali Recreation Club, one of Dubai's oldest and most popular leisure venues by Nakheel, has officially reopened after its extensive refurbishment, which saw the club transform into a new recreational, dining and entertainment destination in Jebel Ali Village. Spanning at 500,000 sq ft., the Club offers a number of unique dining experiences including C House Milano, Ship's Wheels, Andalucia Tapas, Seafood Kitchen and The Club House, in addition to recreational facilities like tennis, squash and a swimming pool. The Club is also due to open its first Reel Cinema – making it the perfect venue for families looking for a mix of leisure and recreation. See on social media *@JebelAliClub*.

Ravioli & Co., DIFC

Text by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SUPPLIED



Izu Brasserie & Bakery, Le BHV Marais, City Walk

Created by the forward-thinking chef Izu Ani, IZU Brasserie located in Le BHV Marais, City Walk is a humble, informal dining spot with the soul of a traditional brasserie, serving simple dishes inspired by Mediterranean culture. IZU Brasserie embodies the same characteristics as its namesake, chef Izu, a place where guests are friends, gathering together in an intimate and welcoming environment, experiencing and sharing good food together. The simple Italian menu has been designed using the highest quality ingredients to create consistently good food. The smell of freshly baked croissants and bread fills the air at IZU Bakery, a lively and friendly neighbourhood Boulangerie. The Bakery's all-day breakfast menu offers a taste of home and includes warm savoury breakfast crepes with a variety of fillings, the signature IZU burger and eggs served in every way imaginable. *Visit lebhvmarais.ae/en/izu/.*



Fumo Lounge by Rosso, Amwaj Rotana

Amwaj Rotana Jumeirah Beach, Dubai has launched a brand-new lounge, as an extension of its Italian restaurant Rosso. Fumo Lounge will bring together the best of the hotel's signature restaurants. The menu was designed based on the idea of sharing concepts in a casual setting. Guests can enjoy sushi and new style sashimi from Benihana, Lebanese dishes with a modern twist, wood-fired flatbreads from the host kitchen, Rosso, and more. The design of Fumo lounge is laid back chic with an Arabesque feel. Seating just over 100 guests in a relaxing ambience, guests can also enjoy a grape mint or a double apple with bubbles, hops and more. Fumo Lounge by Rosso is now open from 5 pm until 1am on weekdays and from 5pm until 2am on weekends. *Call 04-4282000.*

BB, DIFC

Recently opened, BB is designed to give guests a sense of freedom to create their own experiences based on single-plate meals of baos, bowls, salads, grilled items, and sweets. Elements of the East are found throughout the menu, drawing on fresh, simple ingredients combined in well-conceived, accessibly priced dishes for a range of palates and budgets. Stand-out menu items at BB include super green hummus, cauliflower popcorn, and caramelised Brussel sprouts for veggie lovers, while carnivores will appreciate grilled lamb and Wagyu beef skewers as well as bang bang chicken and duck bao. *Call 04-4074444 or e-mail hello@thisisbb.com.*





Rockfish, Jumeirah Al Naseem

Rockfish, the Mediterranean seafood restaurant at Jumeirah Al Naseem has launched a new Lazy Lunch, which takes place every Friday from 1 – 4pm. With sand in your toes, fresh seafood, refreshing drinks, soft beats and a chilled out vibe – all complete with Burj Al Arab views, the Rockfish Lazy Lunch comprises four courses. The first is unlimited crudo such as mussels, clams, Alaskan king crab, razor sheels and smoked and cured salmon, followed by Tasmanian salmon crudo, yellow fin tuna crudo, sea bass crudo, Mediterranean garden salad, cherry tomato tartare, wild mushroom risotto with green asparagus all served at the table. For the third course, enjoy buckets of garlic prawns, mussels and clams, a Seafood mixed grill, baby chicken and oven braised Australian short ribs, served with a selection of sides for the table. If you have space left, there will be four desserts saved on the table, including a strawberry and cream cheesecake. Priced at Dhs350 with soft drinks, Dhs450 with alcoholic beverages, and Dhs175 for kids below 12 years. *Call 04-4323232 or e-mail restaurants@jumeirah.com.*

STK, Rixos Premium Dubai, JBR

International steakhouse, STK, opens its doors in Dubai this December representing the first Middle Eastern outpost. The high-energy dinning and drinks venue offers the ultimate blend of food-meets-party, bringing an all-new experience to Dubai. Serving quality USDA prime beef, STK steaks are famous for their big flavours. Offering a wide selection of cuts, choose from smaller fillets and tender striploins to such larger cuts as the Ribeye, T-bone or Tomahawk. Aside from steak, menu items include the 'Lil' Brgrs', made with USDA beef and STK's special sauce, 'Soft Shell Crab Sliders', 'Hotate Scallop Carpaccio' from the Raw Bar, 'Passion Fruit Miso Black Cod' and delicious 'Braised Beef Short Rib', paired with a side of 'Mac&Cheese' or 'Parmesan Truffle Chips'. *For more information, contact reservations@stkdubaijbr.com.*



Winter Garden Market, St. Regis Dubai

This month at St. Regis Dubai, the festive Winter Garden Market is back and will occupy the property's garden area. Transformed into an enchanted winter wonderland, glistening with dazzling lights and beautiful festive-themed décor, experience the holiday magic as the Winter Garden Market comes alive with entertainment and themed activities for everyone to enjoy. Showcasing an impressive range of retail and unique food stalls, combined with a unique line-up of children's activities and attractions, the Winter Garden Market invites guests to get into the festive spirit from 5pm -11pm from Sunday – Thursday, and from 3pm -11pm on Fridays and Saturdays, with free entry for all. *Call 04-4355577 or e-mail ahc.dining@marriott.com.*

Thiptara, Palace Downtown



Create the most treasured festive memories in the company of loved ones at Thiptara this festive eve. Meaning 'Magic at the Water', this elegant restaurant serves Thai cuisine with an emphasis on Bangkok-style seafood and offers al fresco dining.

Celebrate the season at the most incredible location adjacent to Burj Khalifa and The Dubai Fountain. With a choice on sharing menus or à la carte, the restaurant will be open from 6pm – 12am. *Call 04-8883444 or e-mail dine@emaar.com.*

Bleu Blanc, Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai

International celebrity chef David Myers and his team wishes you a 'Joyeux Noël' this Christmas Day as Bleu Blanc plays host to a festive brunch complete with the traditional French 'chapon', a deliciously tender rooster, along with other Bleu Blanc delicacies. Enjoy an unlimited house beverage package or upgrade to French bubbles and cocktails by mixologist Sam Ross as a Christmas present to yourself. From 12pm – 4pm on December 25, priced at Dhs499 with grape, hops and house pours. *See bleublanc-dubai.com or call 04-5125533.*



Kambaa, Address Dubai Marina

Add a personal touch to your celebrations with an intimate gathering in the comfort of your home, without having to go to the efforts of preparing the feast yourself. Enjoy a sumptuous home-style meal with a roasted turkey with all the trimmings and gravy, up until December 31, priced at Dhs959 for a 6-7 kg turkey hamper, Dhs1,450 for a 10kg turkey hamper, or Dhs750 for a beef rib-eye hamper. To order, *call 04-8883444 or email dine@emaar.com or visit myfestivedubai.com.*



Perry & Blackwelder's, Souk Madinat Jumeirah

This year, P&B are serving up an all-American feast of either a 6kg or 11kg traditional American smoked turkey with gravy, corn bread stuffing and cranberry sauce. Ideal for 4-6 people, the 6kg turkey is priced at Dhs650, while for larger parties the grand 11kg turkey will feed 7-10 hungry people for Dhs895. Each box comes with a selection of four traditional sides, sides including a choice of roast potatoes, mashed potato, Brussel sprouts, boiled cabbage, grilled corn or carrots. To reserve your Takeaway Turkey Festive Box, *visit festivefunderland.com or call 04-4323232.*

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Celebrities, One&Only Royal Mirage

At Celebrities 'Christmas Day White Glove Festive Brunch', enjoy an extensive selection of starters including oysters on ice, white asparagus and caviar as well as homemade foie gras terrine. Middle course options include egg benedic, wild mushrooms and black truffle toast as well as foie gras ravioli. Mains include Australian beef tenderloin served with artichoke puree and barigoule condiments, seabass with fresh herbs, vegetable tian as well as farm roast turkey breast with chestnut stuffing and black truffle sauce. Available from 12.30pm – 4pm, the brunch is priced at Dhs460 (food only) and Dhs740 (with sommelier selection). *Call 04-3999999 or e-mail restaurants@oneandonlyroyalmirage.ae.*

Raffles Dubai



For Christmas Day, Raffles Ballroom and Raffles Garden transform into a winter wonderland, whisking you away for a magical day of incredible cuisine, the finest beverages, enchanting music and sparkling atmosphere. Feast on freshly prepared charcuterie, cheeses, seafood and decadent desserts, as well as an extensive carvery with all the traditional trimmings. Little ones will have a day to remember with children's entertainment, and of course, a special visit from Santa himself. Raffles Christmas Day Brunch takes place on December 25 and is served from 1 – 4.30pm, priced at Dhs475 (soft beverages) or Dhs685 (house beverages). Children aged 7 to 12 are priced at Dhs250, and children aged 6 or under dine for free. *Call 04-3248888 or e-mail dining.dubai@raffles.com.*

Le Petit Belge, JLT

Enjoy Christmas brunch at your own pace at Le Petit Belge, a unique concept combining Belgian hops, Belgian food and Belgian attitude. Available all day on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, eat, drink and be very merry with a four-hour package offering limitless drinks and Christmas classics from arrival for Dhs300 per person. Also, great news for families, children under 12 eat for free. *Call 04-2427794 or e-mail jlt@lepetitbelge.com.*

The Oberoi, Dubai



This festive season, celebrate in style with family and friends whilst enjoying warm, personalised service at The Oberoi, Dubai, located in the heart of Business Bay, which offers stunning views of the Burj Khalifa for the world-class fireworks display on New Year's Eve. From traditional festive fare at world cuisine restaurant Nine7One to authentic Indian delicacies at Ananta, the hotel offers a range of gourmet festive packages and party venues to suit all tastes. Celebrate New Year's Eve at Nine7One with a grand buffet dinner spread out across various food sections inside the restaurant and outdoor courtyard from 7 – 11pm, priced at Dhs725 (soft beverages), Dhs825 (house beverages and Prosecco), and Dhs1,125 (house beverages and Champagne). Or, enjoy a specially crafted five-course festive set menu with sophisticated flavours of royal Indian cuisine at Ananta for Dhs795 (soft beverages), Dhs895 (house beverages), Dhs995 (house beverages and Prosecco), and Dhs1,195 (six-courses, house beverages and Champagne). *Call 04-4441444. bleublanc-dubai.com or call 04-5125533.*

Tribeca Kitchen + Bar, JA Ocean View Hotel

Known for its laid back, casual and welcoming atmosphere, Tribeca has a range of events taking place this festive season, including festive menus for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and NYE. On Christmas Eve from 7 – 11pm, enjoy a set menu and unlimited beverages starting from Dhs249 (soft beverages), Dhs349 (house beverages), and Dhs449 (bubbly). On December 25, from 12pm – 4pm, enjoy a decadent Christmas buffet brunch, with the same package prices as listed above. For New Year's Eve, celebrate at the outlet's 'Prohibition Soiree' with a 5-course set menu, unlimited beverages, firework views from the terrace and tunes from DJ 3G KID. Drinks and dinner packages from 9pm – 1am start at Dhs699, while the drinks-only package starts from Dhs399. *Call 050-3456067or e-mail reservations@tribeca.ae.*



The Restaurant, Address Boulevard

On December 25 from 1 – 4pm, while the band is playing festive music for the jolly brunch, you can indulge in a 3-course set menu which includes a selection of dishes such as Scottish smoked salmon and slow roasted rack of lamb. Desserts will be available at the interactive counter featuring the most awaited festive delights from yule logs to stollen cake. Additionally, a 5kg panettone will be going around in a trolley and served to each table. Priced at Dhs325 (soft beverages), Dhs425 (house beverages) and Dhs525 (bubby), there will be 50% discount for children (6 to 12 years) and it's complimentary for children aged 5 years and below. *Call 04-8883444, e-mail dine@emaar.com or visit myfestivedubai.com.*

Brasserie 2.0, Le Royal Meridien Beach Resort and Spa Dubai

Delight over an array of festive favourites this Christmas Day at Brasserie 2.0. Enjoy a delicious buffet selection with traditional golden roast turkey accompanied with fruity cranberry sauce and all the trimmings. Chefs promise to wow and entertain, serving up a delightful spread of culinary delights. Revel in the festive spirit and sing along to Christmas classics played by a live three-piece band, as the kids are entertained with a whole host of fun activities. After lunch, continue the festivities at the post-lunch party – Vibe at Le Deck. Christmas Day lunch is available from 1.30 – 4.30pm, and is priced at Dhs475 (soft beverages), and Dhs625 (house beverages), and Dhs950 (bubbly). *Call 04-3995555.*



Rüya Dubai, Grosvenor House Hotel

Bring in the New Year with pristine sights over the lively Dubai Marina. Relax with friends and family while enjoying Anatolian cuisine with uninterrupted views onto Dubai's world-renowned fireworks. The resident DJ and three-piece band will set the stage with live entertainment for a memorable evening for the whole family to enjoy. From 7pm – 3am, there's a minimum spend of Dhs500 per person. *Call 04-3999123 or e-mail reservations@ruyadubai.com.*



Katsuya by Starck, Jumeirah al Naseem

Celebrate the end of a fabulous year at Japanese eatery, Katsuya by Starck. With its prime location overlooking Burj Al Arab, enjoy front-row seats to the world-renowned spectacle, the Dubai New Year's Eve fireworks. The night will begin with a feast of classic signatures and sushi rolls. Enjoy a carefully curated set menu of appetizers and delectable mains accompanied by an array of free-flowing beverages and specialty cocktails. With DJ Patchoulee on the decks, this New Year's Eve at Katsuya is set to be a night full of glamour, entertainment, and culinary panache. From 8pm till late, priced at Dhs2,500 per person, inclusive of a set menu and free flowing beverages. *Call 04-4190676 or e-mail katsuyareservations-uae@diversedining.co.uk.*

Wanderlust, JW Marriott Marquis Dubai

Combining three venues at JW Marriott Marquis: Garden, Izakaya and Square will play host to a late evening Wanderlust Brunch from 7 – 11pm this New Year's Eve. Don your best party wear for a night to remember beneath Dubai's magical skyline as you journey around a variety of live cooking stations and beverage stations. Priced at Dhs600 per person including crafted beverages and bubbly. *Call 04-4143000 or email jwmmrr@marriott.com.*



The Atlantic Dubai, Souk Al Bahar

Nestled along Souk Al Bahar's waterfront promenade with a backdrop of the Burj Khalifa and the Dubai Opera, The Atlantic Dubai is your gateway to an unforgettable New Year's Eve extravaganza with some of the best views in town. Immerse yourself in an array of dishes showcasing the freshest produce from land and sea, all complimented by the world's most impressive fireworks show. Inside seating (all inclusive) is priced at Dhs1,499, the terrace corner (all inclusive) is priced at Dhs2,499, and the main terrace is Dhs2,999 (all inclusive) from 9pm – 2am. *Call 04-4425662 or e-mail info@theatlantic-dubai.com.*

↘ Medley Restaurant, Pullman Dubai Creek City Centre

End 2017 in style at Pullman Dubai Creek City Centre's New Year's Eve celebration. The glamorous evening will include the finest food and beverage offerings to make it a night to remember. From 7.30pm to midnight, the evening is priced at Dhs199 (soft drinks), Dhs299 (house beverages), and Dhs70 for children. Call 04-6038082.

↘ Toro + Ko, City Walk

Wave goodbye to 2017 at Toro + Ko, where Barcelona meets New York in the heart of Dubai. With live performances and Toro + Ko's DJ spinning old school hits from the 80's 90's, guests are invited to dine from Toro's a la carte menu with must try dishes including 'gambas de palamos' and 'marisco paella'. For restaurant seating, the beverage package is Dhs800 from 8.30pm – 2am, while the upstairs lounge bar is priced at Dhs250 with open bar on selected beverages from 8pm – 2am. *Call 04-5905433 or e-mail reservations@torodubai.com.*



Asia Asia, Pier 7

This New Year's Eve, Asia Asia presents the ultimate live music experience with 'High on Heels'- a performance featuring DJ Kelly Marie plus percussion and sax. in a special evening brunch menu showcasing tasty Pan-Asian fusion creations, paired with an unlimited beverage package of choice, while you enjoy exceptional views of the Dubai Marina from the Asia Asia terrace. Priced at Dhs499 (drinks only), Dhs699 (brunch and house beverages), and Dhs799 (brunch and bubbly), from 9pm – 1am, with cash bar to follow from 1 – 2am. *Call 04-2765900 or e-mail info@asia-asia.com.*



↘ *Atlantis, The Palm*

Celebrate New Year's Eve at Atlantis, The Palm's Gala Dinner, held on the Atlantis Beach. Enjoy fantastic views of The Palm, the Dubai skyline and the spectacular Atlantis itself. The evening begins at 7.30pm with canapes, bubbly and welcome drinks in Asateer before the venue opens up at 8pm, where a 30-piece live band kicks off the night's entertainment and plays through until 3.00am. The bar will be open all night serving unlimited premium alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks including free flowing bubbly. On the menu is a luxury buffet serving everything from lobster and caviar to shawarmas and fajitas, also on offer will be live cooking stations and a child friendly buffet. From 7.30 – 11pm, the gala is priced at Dhs2,900 for adults, and Dhs2,030 for those aged 12 to 20 years, while children 0 – 11 dine for free. Call 04-4261000, or visit atlantisthepalm.com.



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Tried &tasted

Each month, we review one of the city's top tables.







Reviewed by Sophie McCarrick
Editor of BBC Good Food Middle East, lover of all things food and a keen seeker of new dining experiences.

Where?
GALVIN DUBAI, THE SQUARE, CITY WALK

Dining experience: Dinner

What's it like? Brought to Dubai by famed British brothers, Chris and Jeff Galvin, Galvin Dubai opened doors in October at the fully licensed area of City Walk called The Square. The elegant multi-level restaurant, bar and lounge offers indoor and outdoor seating, which boasts a fantastic social climate that is sophisticated and stylish, yet relaxed and casual – it's easy to feel at ease here, with warm, welcoming interiors and hospitality. Inside, I'm reminded of a high-end traditional British restaurant that marries styles old and new – think dark wood, emerald green and copper tones, with contemporary touches such as the beautifully stocked Crustacea Bar (Cumbrae oysters, Sturia Oscietra caviar, crab, clams and more live here) and views into the kitchen over the pass.

What are the food highlights? Led by executive chef Luigi Vespero, who worked alongside the Galvin's in London, the cuisine at Galvin Dubai is noted as Mediterranean-basin, featuring a seasonal-led menu using ingredients from the west coast of Italy to Barcelona and the southern bay of France – all used to create 'flavours of the sun', as Chris Galvin describes.

Expect classic cooking inspired by modern Mediterranean dishes, using cooking methods such as wood fired ovens and charcoal grills, and a la plancha for lightness and flavour.

Much to my delight, we're told that the menu here is not designed to share – and trust me, you'll be pleased to as the dishes are far too good for sharing!

Menu highlights include escabeche of yellowfin tuna or lasagne of Devon crab served with rich, creamy bisque and lobster oil to start. For mains, the beef tenderloin with caramelised shallots and wild mushrooms is beautifully paired with a light, crumbly bone marrow tart, providing stunning depth of flavour with the meat. My dining partner enjoyed the roast pave of sea bass, which was an equal success with perfectly crisped skin and tender meat, served with cauliflower purée, light curry, raisins and pine nut dressing.

If you're a dessert lover, we'd recommend the Prune & Bas Armagnac crème brûlée, which had great consistency, or the baba au rhum and Moelleux raisins (but be warned, there's strength with this one!).

How was the service? Considering that Galvin Dubai has only been open a couple of months, the team here are well-trained, highly professional and up-to-speed on the outlet's F&B offering.

The bottom line: Galvin Dubai uses great ingredients that are handled with respect, and offered with fantastic value for money. A great place to share an evening with your loved one or a small group of friends over dinner downstairs, followed by drinks at the upstairs bar and lounge.

Want to go? Priced at around Dhs350 for three-courses, without beverages. For more information or to make a reservation, call 04-5905444, e-mail reservations@galvindubai.com, or see galvindubai.com.

Photographs SUPPLIED



COOKING GAME

From roast pheasant to grouse sausage rolls and partridge stuffed with oats, orange and juniper, chef Tom Kitchin talks cooking with game – and, believe it or not, it's easier than you may think.

By Sophie McCarrick

Photographs SUPPLIED, SHUTTERSTOCK



Tom Kitchin's first-class training working in some of Europe's leading kitchens under Pierre Koffmann and Alain Ducasse – to mention a few – has resulted in a sincere passion for innovative, local and seasonal cooking which has become synonymous with his "From Nature to Plate" ethos that runs through the core of his restaurant, The Kitchin in Edinburgh.

The award-winning restaurant which Scottish-born Tom started with his wife and business partner Michaela in 2006 has held a Michelin star for 11 years, receiving it only six months after opening. This made Tom Kitchin Scotland's youngest Michelin starred chef proprietor at just 29.

"Hopefully, by trying out some of the recipes in Meat & Game, home cooks will find out how enjoyable and rewarding it can be to cook with these ingredients"

Tom's popularity and love of using the very best ingredients from the Scottish larder has proven a hit with diners who travel from near and far to visit the restaurant. The Kitchin, as well as his award-winning gastro pub, The Scran & Scallie, have both been acknowledged as some of the best places to dine in Britain.

Tom is a well-known face on British television, appearing as a guest presenter on BBC's The One Show as well as having appeared numerous times on Saturday Kitchen Live, as a mentor on The Chef's Protégé and as guest judge on MasterChef at the Chef's Table.

Having launched his third cookbook this year – Tom Kitchin's Meat & Game – following the popular 'From Nature to Plate' and 'Kitchin Suppers', we caught up with Tom to hear more about his love for cooking with game...

Looking at your background, how did you become a chef – was a career in culinary something you'd always wanted?

When I turned 14, I got a job washing pots and pans in a local pub near my family home in Kinross and straight away I was drawn to the buzz and atmosphere of a busy working kitchen. I knew right there and then that I wanted to be a chef.

Since then, I've had the opportunity to travel the world and work with some of the most talented chefs who have taught me so much and still inspire me and my cooking to this very day. I had always dreamed of opening my own restaurant and the biggest moment in my career has to be when I opened The Kitchin with my wife, Michaela in 2006. It was a dream come true.

You recently launched a new cookbook, 'Meat & Game'. What made you want to bring focus to game only within this book?

I wanted to create a book to share my passion for meat and game and to showcase how incredibly rewarding the process of cooking meat and game really is. I hope that the book educates readers about how to cook with this wonderful produce and helps them discover different ways to enjoy it and get the very best from it at home.

I've lost count of the amount of times I'm asked for top tips on how to get the best results from cooking with meat





and game produce and I want to share some techniques to show that it can actually be a lot simpler than many people first realise. Game in particular can be really affordable, tasty and enjoyable to cook and eat.

For our home cooks reading, what sort of recipes can they expect to find in this book?

There's a really great selection of recipes in the book, from quick and simple mid-week family suppers to some more challenging dishes that will push home cooks out of their comfort zone a little, but for me, that's when cooking really gets exciting.

From roast pheasant with cabbage to partridge and game pie to roast crisp pork belly and blackened chicken tacos, there's something for everyone. Hopefully, by trying out some of the recipes in Meat & Game, home cooks will find out how enjoyable and rewarding it can be to cook with these ingredients.

When it comes to cooking game, many home cooks are a little fearful. What would you say to them to change their perspective on this?

It's understandable that many people feel nervous at the prospect of preparing and cooking game, but I hope the simple techniques and tips that I introduce in this book will show readers that it's actually far simpler than they think.

Many people also think game is very expensive, difficult to get their hands on and cook with, but the opposite is in fact true. Game can be very affordable and is easily accessible – I'd suggest going to a good butcher who can advise on the best cuts to buy and how to prepare and cook them.

For those who haven't ever cooked with game. Which type would you recommend using, and what dish should they try to make?

The open partridge and pancetta toasties with onion compote is a good introduction if you're starting out, because it shows just how simple it can be to enjoy game. I also think the partridge stuffed with oats, orange and juniper – which makes a great Sunday lunch, and the grouse sausage rolls will be popular choices for first time game cooks.

What new ingredients are you inspired most by at the moment?

At the moment, in the middle of the game season, I am very excited about getting my hands on some woodcock. It's a fantastic bird that's only in season for a few weeks, but it gives me a lot of pleasure to cook with. My From Nature to Plate philosophy means I'm constantly inspired by the seasons and work with only the finest ingredients that are sourced locally.

Each season brings with it new ingredients and flavours meaning my menus are constantly evolving. At this time of year, I just love cooking with great game and autumnal fruits and vegetables like apples, brambles and cabbage – the marriage of these flavours truly epitomises Autumn.

Do you think you'll always stay in Scotland?

I love Scotland and Edinburgh in particular. It's where my children were born and where my wife Michaela and I opened our first restaurant. I love to travel and seeing new places and new cultures but I always love coming back to Edinburgh.

We hear you recently made a visit to Maldives to work with Coco Bodu Hithi on something exciting. What took you there?

I partnered with the luxury, five-star resort, Coco Bodu Hithi to create a collaborative menu that showcases my passion for cooking. During my trip, I was lucky to work with the team at the resort's award-winning Aqua restaurant to create a special dinner for guests on 8 and 9 October which celebrated this beautiful island and its produce.

Whenever I have the opportunity to travel, I relish the chance to learn about new ingredients and local cooking techniques. For me, this was a truly unique chance to be inspired by the local cuisine in the most stunning setting in the world.

Do you often make special appearances at handpicked resorts?

For me, the restaurant comes first and I'm dedicated to being in my kitchen in Edinburgh for every service as far as I can be. Last month, our restaurant closed for its annual holiday, giving me the perfect opportunity to visit Coco Bodu Hithi and draw inspiration from somewhere new to me. I couldn't turn down the opportunity to cook at such a stunning place – what a beautiful resort!

Would you ever consider opening a restaurant in Dubai?

We're very much focused on our Edinburgh restaurants just now. The Kitchin underwent a major expansion and refurbishment two years ago and our gastropub, The Scran & Scallie which opened in 2013 goes from strength to strength – it's loved by locals and continues to attract diners from across the world. For the time being, we're very happy to remain in Scotland but who knows what the future holds.

When you're in Dubai, where do you love dining out?

My wife Michaela used to work at Burj al Arab so Dubai has always held a special place in our hearts. We love to come for holidays with our boys and although we often stay at Madinat Jumeirah, we always make a trip to La Petite Maison in Dubai International Financial Centre – our favourite restaurant in Dubai.

When you're at home, what's your favourite meal to cook?

I love a night off with my wife Michaela and our four boys and I also really enjoy cooking on my day off. There is nothing better than having a Sunday Roast and I always try to get the boys involved in the cooking.

To find out more about Tom Kitchin, follow him on Instagram @tom_kitchin or visit thekitchin.com



Planning a foodie getaway for Christmas?

Tom shares his top food destination recommendations for the festive season.

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND – Edinburgh is a great place to visit in the run up to Christmas. The city centre is filled with Christmas markets and food stalls serving mulled wine, festive treats and traditional Scottish dishes. I try to visit the Edinburgh Christmas market with my wife and kids – it really gets us in the mood for the festive season.

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK – Another wonderful place to go for the Christmas spirit is the Scandinavian countries. They take Christmas to another level and we absolutely love it. Copenhagen is a real favourite of ours and the city has some amazing restaurants too.



Tom Kitchin's Meat & Game (Bloomsbury Publishing, August 10, 2017) ***Dhs105, amazon.com***

With a focus on seasonality and the very best produce, Tom Kitchin's Meat & Game new cookbook offers great recipes to try at home.

From venison to partridge, game is an increasingly popular subject, and Tom shows readers how to get the very best out of it, pairing the beautiful flavours with seasonal vegetables to create simple, fulfilling dishes. Alongside classic game recipes, the book also features delicious meat dishes, from steak to Barnsley chops. Recipes vary from simple salads, the ultimate 11's grouse sandwich and easy roasts to venison tartare or mallard en croute – you will be sure to find a recipe for every occasion within these pages.

From one-pot dishes to more elaborate presentations, this is a beautiful book highlighting the very best of British produce from one of Britain's most loved chefs.

BBC goodfood Middle East AWARDS 2017

Made up of 41 individual categories, The BBC Good Food Middle East Awards celebrate the best in food from across the region annually. Now in its eighth year, the event saw finalists and industry professionals come together for a glittering evening of celebration on November 22, 2017 at The Ritz Carlton, JBR, where winners were revealed to the public.

This year, more than 80,000 BBC Good Food Middle East readers voted for their favourites over a six-month period, making it a true consumers choice award.

The Awards are designed to recognise BBC Good Food Middle East's readers opinions about the best in class across the region – taking into consideration food quality, location, ambience, price, service and entertainment standards.

Sophie McCarrick, editor, BBC Good Food Middle East said: *"These consumer choice Awards give our readership a voice, and it's so rewarding for all finalists and winners involved, to be openly supported by their loyal customers and supporters.*

Through hard work and determination, F&B teams across the Middle East have put the region – Dubai in particular – on the map as a culinary destination in recent years, and it's so important that they are recognised for this. I look forward to celebrating continued growth within the industry moving forward."

Here we share with you a glimpse of the star-studded event, and celebrate achievements of the Middle East's culinary scene.

BBC Good Food Middle East would like to congratulate all nominees, finalists and winners!

Text SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs MAKSYM PORIECHKIN & CHARLS THOMAS
















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STAYCATION EXPERIENCE



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FAMILY BRUNCH



WINNER

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BRUNCH



WINNER

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AFTERNOON TEA



WINNER

AL BAYT,
PALACE DOWNTOWN

CASUAL DINING – ABU DHABI



WINNER

SOFRA BLD, SHANGRI-LA
HOTEL QARYAT AL BERI

CAUSUAL DINING – DUBAI



WINNER

COOK HALL, WESTIN
DUBAI, AL HABTOOR CITY

BEST BRITISH RESTAURANT

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES AT DUKES DUBAI HOTEL



Christmas Day Brunch at GBR

Why not take the stress out of Christmas cooking and enjoy brunch at GBR where the culinary team of experts will cook up a festive feast that would make even Ebeneezer Scrooge smile. Along with Santa Claus, sit down to a traditional British Christmas lunch, including prawn cocktail, followed by sumptuous turkey with all those traditional trimmings. But leave room for dessert – you simply can't beat the homemade Christmas pudding or trifle! And you can wash it all down with a free mocktail or glass of fizz - another Christmas present from DUKES Dubai!

Date: Monday, 25 December
Time: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Price: Starting from AED 425 per person
Kids: 6-12 years 50% off, under 6 years free,12 years and above full price



NYE Gala Dinner & Beach Party

Make the beach your base and bring in the New Year with an American BBQ and jazz party at West 14th. Alternatively, dress up in your finest and join in the early celebrations at a Gala Dinner in GBR. Or, take the elevator to the 15th floor and spice up the last hours of 2017 at the Indian inspired Khyber dinner, complete with entertainment. And then it's onto the beach where a DJ will keep you dancing throughout the evening and, when the clock strikes midnight, join in the celebrations around Palm Jumeirah to welcome in the New Year. Every guest will be entered into a special lucky draw!

Date: Sunday, 31 December
Time: From 8:00 pm onwards and from 11:00 pm on the beach until 2:00 am
Price: AED 895 per person, for dinner and house beverage package during dinner, including a glass of sparkling on the beach at 11:50 pm.
Kids: AED 195 for 6-12 years old, AED 495 for 13 to 20 years old, free for children aged 5 years and younger.

A fully inclusive food and beverage package, until 2:00 am, is available for AED 1,250.



New Year's Day Brunch at GBR

Or If your New Year's Resolution includes a diet, why not try and keep it intact for at least the first day of 2018 and opt for a healthy brunch at GBR. Guests need not fear, however, for those looking to be good from the 2nd of the month, there will be plenty of naughty treats to tempt the taste buds!

Date: Friday, 1 January
Time: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Price Starting from AED 295 per person
Kids: 6-12 years 50% off, under 6 years free,12 years and above full price



New Year's Day Brunch at West 14th

Get 2018 off to the perfect start and put your best foot forward – literally, at DUKES Dubai. Fancy starting the year as you mean to go on – remember that resolution on New Year's Eve about getting more exercise? Well here's your chance, at the DUKESY Beach late breakfast and brunch at West 14th from 10am – 4pm, which includes a family sports day…

Date: Monday, 1 January
Time: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Price: Starting from AED 265 per person
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WINNER

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FINE DINING RESTAURANT – ABU DHABI



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JW STEAKHOUSE, MARRIOTT HOTEL DOWNTOWN ABU DHABI

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Four of the region's chefs, as voted by BBC Good Food Middle East readership, battled it out in a mystery box cooking competition last month at The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, to earn the title 'Chef of the Year 2017' and a three-night stay at the 5-star Mövenpick Resort & Spa Jimbaran Bali

MEET OUR FINALISTS!

DIEGO SANCHEZ
LIMA Dubai, City Walk

MAURIZIO BOSETTI
Il Borro Tuscan Bistro, Jumeirah Al Naseem

HIMANSHU SAINI
Tresind, Nassima Royal Hotel

WINNER
FRANCESCO GUARRACINO
Roberto's Abu Dhabi, Al Maryah Island

With two and a half hours to produce a gourmet starter, main and dessert each, the chefs were equipped with a pantry full of essential ingredients, in addition to a mystery box full of produce, of which they were required to use a minimum of two items per course from the box.

Going head-to-head, the chefs were given 30 minutes of menu planning, before cracking on with their starters, which were due up one hour into the cook-off, then 45 minutes later their mains, and finally 45 minutes after, their desserts.

Served to a panel of industry experts, including Michael Kitts, Director of Culinary Arts at The Emirates Academy, last year's competition winner Benjamin Wan, Executive Chef at Coya, Gina Garaventa, Marketing Manager at Miele, plus Wael Jamil, General Manager, HORECA Trade, the dishes were judged on: technique, use of ingredients, presentation, creativity, and taste.

To level the playing field, all judging for this competition was done blindly, and chefs were given a number for the judges to identify them with. Up against the clock, in a new kitchen and mystery ingredients, the chefs took on quite a challenge!

After tough deliberation, the judges came to a final decision – revealing Chef Francesco Guarracino as BBC Good Food Middle East's Chef of the Year 2017 competition winner!

Text SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs MAKSYM PORIECHKIN







"To be a finalist, it feels amazing! It's a great achievement not only for me, but most importantly my team as it shows them that they're doing good in the kitchen on a daily basis, and that's why we're here today."

CHEF FRANCESCO





"This competition really challenges you to think fast on your feet and make the most of what's in front of you in a short space of time. It was a lot of fun."

CHEF DIEGO





"It's a privilege to be a finalist. If you see the list of chefs who have participated over the last couple of years, they are all masters of their own kitchens, so it's an honour to be a part of this competition."

CHEF HIMANSHU



"When I opened the mystery box we were presented with very good ingredients, which was a nice surprise, it was great to participate."

CHEF MAURIZIO



WITH THANKS TO

Appliance Partner: Miele

Mystery Box partner: HORECA

Venue Partner: The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management

Prize Partner: Mövenpick Resort & Spa Jimbaran Bali

Official Publication: goodfood

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Christmas Breakfast pancakes

Whether you have them fluffy or folded, sweet or savoury, pancakes are a simple treat over the holidays

recipes CHELSIE COLLINS ***photographs*** MIKE ENGLISH





Gingerbread pancakes

MAKES 10 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 15-20 mins **EASY** V

150g self-raising flour
½ tsp baking powder
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp cinnamon
2 tsp golden caster sugar
1 egg, beaten
½ tbsp maple syrup, plus extra to serve
200ml full-fat or semi-skimmed milk
vegetable oil, for frying
100g pitted dates, chopped, to serve
100ml crème fraîche, to serve

1 Put the flour, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon and sugar in a large bowl with a pinch of salt. Combine the egg, maple syrup and milk in a jug. Gradually add to the dry ingredients, whisking until a smooth, silky batter forms.



2 Heat a drizzle of oil in a large, non-stick pan over a medium heat and ladle 2-3 small rounds into the pan. Cook for 1-2 mins until bubbles start to appear on the surface, then flip over and cook for a further 1 min until fluffy. Do this in batches until you have 10 pancakes.
3 Serve in a stack, with extra maple syrup, a blob of crème fraîche and dates scattered over.

PER PANCAKE 111 kcals • fat 5g • saturates 1g • carbs 14g • sugars 2g • fibre 1g • protein 3g • salt 0.3g

Smoked ham & cheese pancakes

MAKES 4 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 8 mins **EASY**

100g plain flour
1 egg, beaten
200ml full-fat or semi-skimmed milk
½ tbsp vegetable oil, plus extra for frying
30g butter
80g smoked ham, diced
80g Gruyère, grated
small handful chives, snipped

1 Put the flour and ½ tsp salt in a bowl. Combine the eggs with the milk and oil, then gradually pour into the dry ingredients, whisking constantly until it's a smooth batter. Transfer to a large jug.
2 Swirl a little oil around a large, non-stick pan over a gentle heat. Pour a quarter of



the batter into the pan, tilting to coat the entire base. Cook for 1 min, flip over and cook for a further 30 secs. On one half of the pancake, add ¼ of the butter and sprinkle over ¼ of the ham and cheese. Grind over some black pepper and fold the pancake over the fillings. Fold in half again and transfer to a plate to serve. Repeat until you have four pancakes. Serve scattered with the chives.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium
PER PANCAKE 327 kcals • fat 19g • saturates 10g • carbs 23g • sugars 2g • fibre 1g • protein 15g • salt 1.6g

gf

For more pancake recipes, visit *bbcgoodfoodme.com*

Rudolph pancakes

MAKES 4 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 15 mins **EASY** V

150g self-raising flour
½ tsp baking powder
½ tbsp golden caster sugar
1 egg, beaten
½ tbsp maple syrup, plus extra to serve
150ml full-fat or semi-skimmed milk
vegetable oil, for frying
a few drops red food colouring
icing sugar, for dusting
You will need
2 squeezy bottles

1 Mix the dry ingredients in a bowl with a pinch of salt. Combine the wet ingredients in a jug and gradually pour into the dry ingredients, whisking until a smooth batter forms.
2 Put 2 tbsp of the batter in a small bowl and mix in a few drops of red food colouring. Transfer to a squeezy bottle.



3 Put ⅓ of the remaining batter into the other squeezy bottle, and the remaining ⅔ into a jug.
4 Gently heat a drizzle of oil in a non-stick pan. Squeeze some batter into an outline of Rudolph, drawing two holes for eyes. Fill the rest with batter from the jug. Make a nose using the coloured batter. Cook for 1-2 mins, flip and cook for 1 min more. Repeat to make four pancakes. Serve with icing sugar and maple syrup.

PER PANCAKE 218 kcals • fat 6g • saturates 1g • carbs 34g • sugars 6g • fibre 1g • protein 6g • salt 0.6g

Spinach protein pancakes

MAKES 12 **PREP** 15 mins
COOK 25 mins **EASY** V

284ml pot buttermilk
1 egg, beaten, plus 2 poached eggs per person, to serve (optional)
200g spinach
175g buckwheat flour
1 tsp gluten-free baking powder
pinch of paprika
rapeseed oil, for frying

1 Boil the kettle, and put the buttermilk and beaten egg in a food processor. Put the spinach in a colander and pour over boiling water to wilt. Squeeze out any excess water, add to the processor and blitz to a smooth purée.
2 Put all the dry ingredients, plus 1 tsp salt, in a bowl and gradually mix in the purée. If a little thick, add 1 tbsp water to loosen to a batter consistency.



3 Heat a drizzle of oil in a large, non-stick pan over a medium heat and spoon in two or three ladlefuls of batter. Cook for 1-2 mins or until bubbles appear, then flip over for 1 min more or until cooked. Repeat until you have 12 pancakes. Serve topped with poached eggs, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • gluten free
PER PANCAKE 241 kcals • fat 14g • saturates 3g • carbs 10g • sugars 1g • fibre 2g • protein 17g • salt 0.9g

Food styling ELLIE JARVIS | Styling SARAH BIRKS







Yule logs, mince pies, Christmas pudding, stollen, home-made gingerbread houses and more, all available for purchase at Amwaj Rotana from December 5 – 31!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Enjoy a magical festive season at Amwaj Rotana, Jumeirah Beach, Dubai, with a calendar full of gourmet delight

Turkey takeaway
December 5 – 31
For Dhs650 per 8kg turkey, enjoy a traditional roast bird takeaway with cranberry chestnut stuffing, roasted new potatoes, maple glazed root vegetables, brussels sprouts, cranberry and bread sauce – all prepared for you to enjoy at home.

Special dinner menus at Rosso & JB's Gastropub
December 21 – 27 from 6 – 11.30pm
JB's will present a special menu of Christmas specials comprising of crunchy chestnut soup, roasted turkey, traditional Christmas pudding with crème anglaise and a Christmas magnum, while Rosso will offers a luxurious menu with smoked duck breast, saffron risotto and spiced manjari mousse.

New Year's Eve at JB's Gastropub
December 31 from 8pm – 3am
Welcome the New Year with entertainment from awe-inspiring magician, Nabeel Bera, while popular DJ Darryl Rees gets behind the decks to play top party tunes. With a 'Black and Silver' dress code, the party is priced at Dhs100 (entry with standard beverages), Dhs249 with unlimited house beverages) and Dhs399 (3-course meal with house beverages).

Christmas Eve dinner at Horizon
December 24 from 6.30 – 10.30pm
The hotel promises a sumptuous buffet at its Christmas Eve dinner offering customary Christmas dishes like a luscious turkey, mince pies, log cakes and other sweet treats with a special visit from Santa. Priced at Dhs199 (soft drinks), Dhs299 (selected house beverages), Dhs99 for kids aged 6 – 12 years, and kids under 6 dine complimentary.

New Year's Eve at Rosso & Benihana
December 31 from 8pm – 2am
Enjoy a New Year's Eve Gala with a regal buffet of over 100 dishes, music by Resident DJ Denero, and the antics of the roving magician, Nabeel Bera. The UAE's original swing band, The Swing Revue will play live and there's also the chance to catch fireworks along JBR. With a white dress code, the gala is priced at Dhs200 (four house beverages), Dhs599 (soft drinks), Dhs799 (bubbles and house beverages), Dhs1,099 (premium bubbles), Dhs299 for kids ages 6 – 12 years, and kids under 6 years dine complimentary.

Christmas Day brunch at Rosso & Benihana
December 25 from 12.30 – 4.30pm
This Christmas, delight in a hearty festive spread with live stations, traditional roast and chef's specials. Children can also look forward to festive activities as well as a special visit from Santa Claus. Priced at Dhs339 (soft drinks), Dhs449 (bubbles and standard house beverages), Dhs649 (premium bubbles), Dhs150 for kids aged 6 – 12 years, and kids under 6 dine complimentary.

New Year's Day brunch at Rosso & Benihana
January 1 from 12.30 – 4.30pm
A family-friendly way to kick start 2018 - offering a buffet featuring the best and most iconic dishes from the signature restaurants as well as entertainment for the kids and lively tunes by a live DJ. Priced at Dhs245 (soft drinks), Dhs375 (bubbles and house beverages), Dhs690 (premium bubbles), Dhs150 for kids aged 6 to 12 years, and kids under 6 dine complimentary.

Christmas Day lunch at JB's Gastropub
December 25 from 12 – 4pm
JB's Gastropub puts on a pub-style festive lunch with soup and salad served to order plus a main course and dessert buffet. A resident DJ will play festive and contemporary hits. Priced at Dhs250 (soft drinks), and Dhs375 (house beverages).

Amwaj Rotana
Jumeirah Beach – Dubai

Amwaj Rotana, Jumeirah Beach Dubai | Call: 04-4282000 | Visit: Rotana.com

WAKA

Latin American Restaurant & Bar



Cazuela de lubina

The Oberoi, Al A'amal Street, Business Bay, Dubai. | FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL T +971 44 441455



Welcome 2018 at WAKA's New Year's Eve Party!

A authentic taste of Latin America

Experience true, vibrant flavours of Latin America at WAKA Restaurant & Bar – this year's recipient of the *BBC Good Food Middle East Award* for 'Best Americas & Caribbean', and home to award-winning Chef Roberto Segura, who took home multiple awards at *The Pro Chef Middle East Awards*, including the title 'Pro Chef of the Year 2017'

Offering a relaxed and immersive space for you to unwind, WAKA aims to create an unforgettable dining experience where you'll be immersed into a stunning atmosphere and can enjoy creative and innovative food and drinks, inspired by the best flavours of Latin America with an Asian twist.

Located in The Oberoi Hotel, WAKA offers a sophisticated level of dining, with an inviting vibe created by the warmth of the service and the resident DJ setting the mood. It brings together the perfect blend of service, style, and design, creating a setting for both an intimate and fun dining experience.

With live cooking at the ceviche bar and a vegetarian menu in addition to the a-la-carte offering, WAKA caters to a diverse crowd and sets the scene for a great night out.

DON'T MISS

Maki Mondays: All you can eat Maki from 8pm – 10pm, with a glass of grape for AED 150
Taco Tuesdays: All you can eat tacos from 8pm –10pm, with a glass of margarita or grape for AED 150
Ladies Night on Wednesdays: From 7.30pm- 12am ladies can enjoy three complimentary beverages, with 50% off on main courses (for ladies-only tables)
Fiesta Latina Brunch: Every Friday from 12.30 – 4pm
Late Brunch: Every Friday from 8 –11.30pm

CAZUELA DE LUBINA

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

520 gr. Sea bass with skin
260 gr. Rice cooked
260 gr. Dry potato
24 gr carrots
24 gr feta cheese
20 gr parmesan cheese
60 gr whipping cream
2 g flowers
16 gr. Salsa criolla
8 gr. Onion paste.

SALSA CRIOLLA

32 gr. Red onion
3 gr. Coriander sticks
3 gr. Red chili
1 gr. Fine salt
0.5 gr. Black pepper
5 gr. Lime juice

METHOD

1. Sear the sea bass on a high heat on the skin side only. After searing, remove from pan and set aside.
2. In a pan, add the onion paste and sauté a little bit before mixing with the dry potato (pre-dehydrated the night before), the rice, huancaina, huacatay mayo, whipping cream, Parmesan, feta cheese and carrots.
3. Join all ingredients together with the fish and finish in the Josper.
4. To serve, finish with salsa criolla, which should be made by cutting the onions in juliane, with chili, coriander in brunoise, and mix with the salt, pepper and lime juice. Top with the flowers.



Chef Roberto Segura

Passionate about food from an early age, chef Roberto's father ignited his love for Peruvian food. Soon after graduating from high school Roberto landed his first job as a chef in one of Lima's top Peruvian eateries, Bravo Restobar. Headhunted and trained by celebrity chefs throughout his career, including household names such as Christian Bravo and Richard Sandoval, Roberto has gained almost a decade of unparalleled experience in fine dining cuisine. Since his move to Dubai in 2011 where he joined the opening team of Toro Toro at Grosvenor House Hotel, Roberto's career led him to direct kitchens including The Act in Shangri La Hotel Dubai. Roberto is a graduate chef in food and beverage administration from Ilda in Lima Peru, and a post-graduate in modern cuisine from Argentina. Roberto is culinary ambassador of the Trade Office of Peru in UAE and specialist in Peruvian, Latin American and Asian cuisine.

W A K A

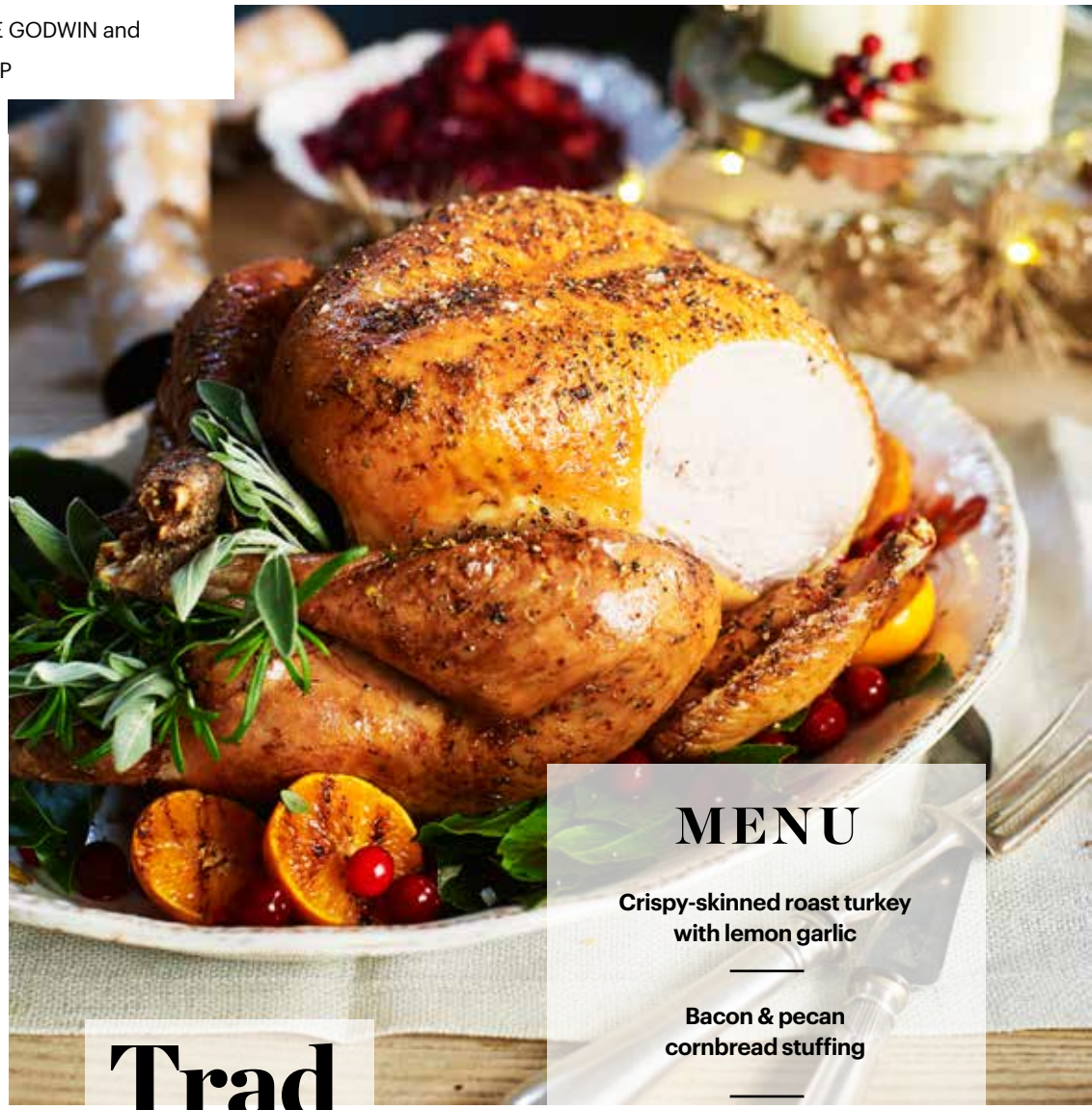
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Christmas 3 ways

You'll find a menu to suit every family in *Good Food* this month so whether you want a twist on the traditional, a chance to show-off or the easiest-ever Christmas day, look no further

recipes BARNEY DESMAZERY, SOPHIE GODWIN and MIRIAM NICE ***photographs*** WILL HEAP



Everyone celebrates Christmas in their own way, so we've created three festive menus with some vegetarian sides to suit every table, plus three essential festive sauces.

If you've got children to cater for, presents, chocolate coins, and tinsel take priority over a perfectly matched table setting, so our easiest ever turkey crown and all-the-trimmings traybake may be just the solution you need. Or, if you want to put an exciting spin on the classic spread, choose our traditional with a twist menu and make a couple of clever tweaks to a familiar much-loved formula and surprise everyone. If you've got time on your side, go all out this year with a boned, rolled turkey served with a grown-up take on sprouts, or perhaps your family already has the only turkey recipe you'll ever need, in which case here are a choice of 10 exciting new side dishes to try, plus a sourdough bread sauce, sloe gin cranberry sauce and turkey & chestnut gravy.

Whichever way you decide to cook your Christmas meal this year, here is your one-stop-shop for the big day PLUS a time plan to fill in to help you get your dinner on the table exactly when you want it.

Trad with a twist

MENU

Crispy-skinned roast turkey with lemon garlic

Bacon & pecan cornbread stuffing

Hazelnut & mustard carrots

Charred sprouts with marmite butter

Juniper & apple red cabbage

Parmesan roasties

For more Christmas dinner recipes, visit *bbcgoodfoodme.com*



easiest-ever CHRISTMAS DAY

MENU

Super-easy sticky glazed turkey crown

All-the-trimmings traybake

Stir-fried festive cabbage



SHOW-OFF CHRISTMAS

MENU

Turkey, bacon & chorizo bombe

Black pepper hasselback potatoes

Smoky sweet roots

Sherried sprout & savoy gratin

Trad with a twist

This menu uses storecupboard ingredients to make the turkey, potatoes and sprouts a bit more special

Crispy-skinned roast turkey with lemon & garlic

If you have time, salt the turkey up to three days before – this acts as a brine and makes the bird more succulent.

SERVES 8 **PREP** 30 mins plus up to 2 days brining **COOK** 3 hrs 25 mins plus resting **EASY** ❄

5-6kg oven-ready turkey, neck and giblets removed and kept for the gravy (see p76)
1 onion, halved
1 lemon, halved (save the zest for the butter)
whole bulb of garlic, halved
for the salt mix
2 tbsp sea salt
1 tbsp thyme leaves
1 tsp peppercorns
for the butter
100g butter
4 tbsp vegetable bouillon powder (we used Marigold)
1 lemon, zested (from the lemon for the turkey)

1 Up to two days ahead, make the salt mix by grinding the salt with the thyme leaves and pepper in a spice grinder or using a pestle and mortar. Sit the turkey in a roasting tin and gently push your fingers under the skin, starting from the neck, until you can push your whole hand in down the length of the breast. Take care not to tear the skin. Season the bird all over with the salt mix, inside and out and under the skin. Leave the turkey in the tin, breast-side up, and put in the fridge for up to two days – the longer you salt it, the more succulent the turkey will be. For the crispest skin, leave the turkey uncovered so it dries out, but loosely cover it if you prefer.

2 Tip the butter, vegetable stock powder and lemon zest into a small bowl and mix until completely combined. Cover and chill. *Can be made a few days ahead or frozen, wrapped in cling film, for one month.*

3 Remove the turkey from the fridge an hour or so before you want to cook it. Remove the butter from the fridge to soften. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Work out your cooking time based on 40 mins per kg for the first 4kg, plus 45 mins for every kg after that.

4 Use your hands to spread the butter under the skin so that it covers the entire breast area and work it into the crevice between the thigh and the main body, then smooth the skin over with your hands. Put the onion, lemon halves, and garlic in the cavity.

5 Cover the tin loosely with foil and roast for the calculated cooking time. Around 30 mins before the end of cooking, increase the oven temperature to 200C/180C fan/gas 6, remove the foil, baste the turkey and return to the oven. When the turkey is beautifully brown and cooked through, remove from the oven and leave to rest on a warm platter covered with foil for up to 1 hr. Save the juices from the tin to make gravy, see p76.

PER SERVING 679 kcals • fat 33g • saturates 14g • carbs 2g • sugars 1g • fibre none • protein 94g • salt 4.8g



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Juniper & apple red cabbage

SERVES 8 PREP 20 mins COOK 1 hr EASY V ❄

1.5kg red cabbage, quartered, tough core removed
2 red onions, sliced
4 red apples, peeled, cored and chopped
1 orange, zested
2 tsp juniper berries, lightly crushed
1 tbsp light soft brown sugar
60ml cider vinegar
250ml cloudy apple juice
25g butter

Thinly slice the red cabbage, then put in a large saucepan along with the rest of the ingredients. Bring to the boil, stirring regularly, then cover and cook over a low heat for 1 hr or until tender and the liquid has been absorbed, stirring occasionally. Season to taste. *Can be made ahead, covered and chilled for two days or frozen for up to one month.* Reheat in a pan or in the microwave.

GOOD TO KNOW low fat • fibre • vit c • 2 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING 120 kcals • fat 3g • saturates 2g • carbs 17g • sugars 16g • fibre 6g • protein 2g • salt 0.1g

Hazelnut & mustard carrots

SERVES 6-8 PREP 10 mins COOK 8 mins EASY

50g whole blanched hazelnuts
2 tsp Dijon mustard
1 tsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp dry sherry
50ml vegetable oil
500g carrots, thinly sliced

1 Toast the hazelnuts in a dry, non-stick pan until golden . Leave to cool a little, then roughly chop or crush using a pestle and mortar. Whisk the mustard with the vinegar and sherry, then slowly pour in the oil, whisking all the time. Season and set aside.
2 Boil the carrots for 3-4 mins or until just tender, drain and tip back into the pan. Pour over the dressing, stir to coat, cook over a low heat for 1-2 mins, then tip into a serving dish. Scatter over the hazelnuts and serve.

GOOD TO KNOW healthy • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING (8) 127 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 1g • carbs 4g • sugars 4g • fibre 2g • protein 1g • salt 0.2g

Charred sprouts with Marmite butter

SERVES 8 PREP 10 mins COOK 10 mins EASY V ❄

100g unsalted butter, softened
3 tsp Marmite
500g sprouts, halved

1 Beat the butter and Marmite together until smooth, then form it into a log on a piece of baking parchment, roll up and twist the ends like a Christmas cracker. Chill in the fridge until you need it. *Will keep for up to a week in the fridge or two months in the freezer.*
2 Boil the sprouts for 3-4 mins, then drain and leave to steam-dry. Heat a non-stick frying pan, then add the sprouts and dry-fry them for 4-5 mins or until they start to blacken on the cut sides and at the edges. Take the pan off the heat, then add a chunk of the marmite butter (keep the rest for another day). Sizzle until the butter has melted and shake the pan gently to coat the sprouts. Season with pepper, but taste before adding salt.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • 1 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 127 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 7g • carbs 2g • sugars 2g • fibre 3g • protein 3g • salt 0.4g

Parmesan roasties

Polenta adds an extra crunch.

SERVES 6-8 PREP 15 mins COOK 55 mins EASY

2 kg floury potatoes, peeled and cut in half, or quarters if large
5 tbsp sunflower oil
5 tsp fine polenta
100g parmesan, finely grated

1 Boil the potatoes in a large pan of water for 12 mins, drain, leave to cool, then put into the fridge until you're ready to roast them. *Can be done a day ahead.*
2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Pour the oil into a large, deep roasting tin, then put in the oven. Tip the polenta into a large casserole dish and season well. Add the potatoes, and turn them over to coat.
3 Take the tin of oil out of the oven and, using tongs, carefully add the potatoes. Turn them over and sprinkle any remaining polenta over the top, then return the tin to the oven for 30 mins.
4 Scatter the parmesan over the potatoes, turn them to coat, then return to the oven for a further 20 mins, or until crisp and golden.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING (8) 319 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 3g • carbs 44g • sugars 2g • fibre 4g • protein 9g • salt 0.2g

Bacon & pecan stuffing cornbread

SERVES 8 PREP 25 mins COOK 15 mins EASY

75g butter, melted, plus extra for the tin
250g fine polenta
150g plain flour
1½ tsp baking powder
1 tbsp sugar
500ml buttermilk (or 500ml semi-skimmed milk with a squeeze of lemon juice)
2 eggs, beaten
25g bacon lardons
1 onion, chopped
2 celery sticks, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
75g dried apricots, halved
50g pecans, chopped
½ tsp ground nutmeg
250g pork mince
1½ tbsp thyme leaves, chopped
25g dried cranberries

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Brush a 20 x 30cm roasting tin with melted butter. Combine the polenta, flour, baking powder, sugar and 2 tsp salt in a large mixing bowl. Mix the melted butter, buttermilk and eggs in a jug, then make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and pour in the buttermilk mixture. Stir well until smooth.
2 Fry the bacon in a large frying pan until it starts to crisp, then add the onion and celery and cook for 5 mins. Add the rest of the stuffing ingredients and the cornbread mix, season well and stir together.
3 Scrape it all into the prepared tin and bake for 1 hr or until cooked through. Cut into squares to serve.

PER SERVING 435 kcals • fat 19g • saturates 7g • carbs 48g • sugars 11g • fibre 4g • protein 16g • salt 1.9g



Juniper & apple red cabbage



Hazelnut & mustard carrots



Bacon & pecan stuffing cornbread



Parmesan roasties



Charred sprouts with Marmite butter

easiest-ever CHRISTMAS DAY

Juggling your kids' excitement at opening presents with trying to cook dinner is no easy task, so make it simple by using this menu where most of the veg and trimmings go in one tray and your turkey cooks in under two hours

Super-easy sticky glazed turkey crown

To get the best of those festive flavours but without the fuss, we've used the traditional glaze you would get on a ham on an easy-to-roast turkey crown.

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 1 hr 30 mins **EASY**

50g butter, softened
2kg turkey crown on the bone
1 tsp Chinese five spice or a pinch of ground cloves

for the glaze
4 tbsp honey
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tbsp red wine vinegar

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Smear the butter all over the turkey crown and season all over with salt and half the five spice. Put in a roasting tin, skin-side up, and roast for 30 mins. While the crown is roasting, mix all the glaze ingredients in a bowl with the rest of the five spice.
2 Remove the crown from the oven and brush the skin generously with half the glaze. Continue to roast for another hr, glazing twice more, until cooked all the way through and the glaze is sticky and caramelised. Leave to rest for at least 20 mins before carving. Save the juices from the tin to make gravy, see p36.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING 519 kcals • fat 22g • saturates 10g • carbs 16g • sugars 16g • fibre 1g • protein 65g • salt 1.3g



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Super-easy sticky glazed turkey crown

All-the-trimmings traybake

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 50 mins **EASY**

1 tbsp olive oil
3 tbsp caramelised onion chutney
1kg small potatoes, halved
4 parsnips, cut into chunky pieces
4 carrots, cut into chunky pieces
200g sprouts, trimmed and halved
2 small red onions, cut into wedges
12 cocktail sausages wrapped in bacon
2 bay leaves
4 rosemary sprigs

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Mix the oil and chutney together and season well. Divide everything except the sausages and herbs between two large roasting tins, pour over the oil and chutney mixture and toss together. Put both trays in the oven for 25 mins.
2 Add the sausages to the trays and bake, stirring halfway through, for 30-35 mins more or until the vegetables are soft and the sausages are cooked through. If one tray is browning more than the other, swap them round.

GOOD TO KNOW low fat • folate • fibre • vit c • 3 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 479 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 3g • carbs 75g • sugars 21g • fibre 17g • protein 11g • salt 0.6g



Stir-fried festive cabbage

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 10 mins **EASY** V

½ red cabbage, quartered and core removed
200g bag shredded kale, or cavolo nero, sliced and woody stalks removed
1 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil
1 tbsp butter
2 tsp cranberry sauce
50ml red wine
½ orange, juiced and zested

1 Finely shred the cabbage – the quickest way to do this is in a food processor with a shredder attachment or using a mandoline.
2 Heat the oil in a wok or large frying pan, then add the cabbage and kale. Stir-fry over a high heat for 3-4 mins or until the cabbage starts to wilt, then add the rest of the ingredients. Toss everything together really well, continue to cook for a further 4 mins and season before serving. *Keep warm in a low oven if needed or leave to cool, cover, chill and reheat in a pan or microwave the following day.*

GOOD TO KNOW healthy • vit c • 2 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING 118 kcals • fat 6g • saturates 2g • carbs 8g • sugars 3g • fibre 3g • protein 2g • salt 0.2g

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SHOW-OFF CHRISTMAS

Take turkey to a whole new level and amaze your guests. Do a little cheffy prep and you'll be rewarded with a meal that looks as good as it tastes. And you can make most of this meal ahead

Turkey, bacon & chorizo bombe

The bacon bombe was a barbecue internet sensation: here we've reworked it as a Christmas main course.

SERVES 10 with leftovers **PREP** 40 mins **COOK** 1 hr 15 mins **MORE EFFORT** P

8 pork & herb sausages or 500g sausagemeat
3 garlic cloves, finely grated
1 small pack parsley, roughly chopped
1 egg
32 rashers smoked streaky bacon
1.6kg boneless, skinless turkey breasts (1 large or 2 small breasts)
1 tbsp sunflower oil
6 pieces cooking chorizo
1 tbsp maple syrup

1 Squeeze the sausages into a bowl or tip in the sausagemeat. Add the garlic, parsley and egg, and squish through with your fingers to mix everything well.
2 Lay a large sheet of baking parchment on your work surface. Use the bacon to make a large rectangular lattice, weaving the rashers in and out of each other. Place a piece of baking parchment on top, then use a rolling pin to roll over the bacon and seal the rashers together.
3 Butterfly the turkey breast by cutting into one side of it so you can open it like a book. Cover with cling film and use a meat mallet or rolling pin to gently bash out into a rectangle that fits inside the bacon, with a 2.5cm border of bacon on each side.
4 To build the bombe, peel the top layer of parchment off the bacon, leaving it lying on the bottom sheet. Arrange the turkey, skinned-side down, on the bacon, then pat the sausage mixture on top. Trim the rounded ends off the chorizo and line them, ends touching, along the middle of the sausage meat mixture. Use the edge of the baking parchment to lift and roll the bacon and turkey into a tight log. Tie the bombe at intervals with string to keep it together, then wrap well in cling film and put in the fridge. *Can be prepared, up to this point, and chilled two days ahead.*
5 To cook, heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Remove the cling film, then brush the bombe with a little oil, put it seam-side down on a baking sheet, and roast for 30 mins until the bacon has crisped up, then reduce oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 6. Brush with the maple syrup to give it a sticky finish and continue to roast for another 45 mins or until the middle of the bombe reaches 75C on a digital cooking thermometer (check after 30 mins as oven temperatures do vary). Leave to rest for at least 15 mins before carving into thick slices. Any leftovers are delicious cold. Save the juices from the tin to make gravy, see p76.

PER SERVING 656 kcals · fat 41g · saturates 14g · carbs 7g · sugars 3g · fibre 2g · protein 64g · salt 3.9g









UNFORGETTABLE DESERT DINING

Step into magical desert surroundings for a dining experience to remember this al fresco season at Farmhouse, the brand-new restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton Ras Al Khaimah, Al Wadi Desert

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The Ritz-Carlton Ras Al Khaimah, Al Wadi Desert has welcomed its latest dining concept, Farmhouse, to the resort. Offering a traditional sense of 'home' along with exceptional cuisine, Farmhouse is a rustic dining retreat featuring farm-to-table elements.

Offering authentic, fresh food in the heart of the desert, the vintage inspired Farmhouse is a relaxing indulgence to spend an evening. Within a setting of dark, earthy tones, the ambiance inside is like that of a country cottage with dark wood and leather tones, along with vintage-style tiled floors. In striking complacence, the spectacular terrace encases views overlooking the breathtaking dunes with a front row seat of the untouched watering hole's magnificence.

From a range of aged meats to a colorful array of seasonal vegetables, dishes are designed with authenticity and purity, with a deliberate touch of local influence. In the one-of-a-kind smokehouse, the most exquisite rubs and flavour-packed woods intertwine seamlessly to transform the tender meat cuts to unimaginable heights. On the Josper Grill, an elegant combination of a grill and oven, meats cook more efficiently through the genuine heat of burning charcoals. Farmhouse offers fresh, daily baked bread, served alongside a special array of spreads.

At dinner, expect menu delights including the likes of duck rillettes, beef tartar, Australian Black Onyx tomahawk for two, charred octopus, grilled Canadian lobster, sustainable Chilean seabass, succulent Wagyu brisket, s'mores chocolate sundae and much more.

Keeping in mind health intolerances and preferences, there are catered options for gluten-free and vegan guests. Farmhouse is the perfect location to gather friends and family together to enjoy dinner and a selection of signature smoked cocktails on the terrace. A unique picnic styled Friday brunch will soon be another delicious occasion to enjoy at Farmhouse when it launches. For more intimate or special occasions, visitors can exclusively book the private dining room or the whisky lounge and library for true silver service.

Black pepper hasselback potatoes

There's no need to peel or parboil. Prep the potatoes in the morning, then put them in the oven an hour before you want to eat.

SERVES 10 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 1 hr 25 mins **EASY** V

2.5kg medium potatoes, scrubbed (choose a variety that roasts well like Maris Piper)
2½ tsp black peppercorns
150g butter
120ml olive oil
2 large lemons, zest pared

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Rest each potato on a large serving spoon and cut widthways at 3mm intervals – cutting the potato on a spoon stops you slicing all the way through. Repeat with all the potatoes. Roughly grind the peppercorns with a pestle and mortar.
2 Melt the butter and oil in a large roasting tin, once sizzling, add the potatoes and pared lemon zest. Toss well so that all the potatoes get coated in the fat, then season well with salt and three quarters of the freshly ground black pepper. Roast on the bottom shelf of the oven for 1 hr-1 hr 15 mins until golden and tender. Discard the lemon zest and scatter over the remaining pepper to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING 415 kcals • fat 25g • saturates 10g • carbs 42g • sugars 2g • fibre 4g • protein 5g • salt 0.5g





Smoky sweet roots

The sweet butter and sugar glaze contrasts beautifully with the charred smoky flavour.

SERVES 10 **PREP** 10 mins plus overnight chilling
COOK 45 mins **EASY** V

75g butter
75g caster sugar
600g baby carrots, scrubbed (about 2cm of the tops left on), any larger ones cut in half lengthways
600g baby parsnips, scrubbed, any larger ones cut in half lengthways
smoked salt
1 lemon, juiced
parsley, roughly chopped

1 The day before, put the butter, sugar and 500ml water in a deep frying pan. Heat until the butter is melted, then bring the liquid to the boil and simmer until lightly syrupy. Drop in the parsnips and cook, covered, for 6-8 mins until just tender then, using tongs, transfer to a roasting tin. Repeat with the carrots then tip them, with the liquid, into the roasting tin with the parsnips. Leave to cool, then put in the fridge overnight.
2 When you are ready to eat, take the roots out the fridge, and lift out the syrup. Discard the syrup. Heat a griddle or frying pan until searing hot then, in batches, put the roots cut-side down in the pan and cook for a min on each side until visibly charred. Sprinkle over the smoked salt, lemon juice and some parsley to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW low fat • fibre • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING 78 kcals • fat 2g • saturates 1g • carbs 11g • sugars 7g • fibre 6g • protein 1g • salt 0.7g

Shoot directors MARTIN TOPPING, CHERRY FERMOR, GARETH JONES
Food stylists JENNIFER JOYCE, KATY GREENWOOD | Stylist LUIS PERAL



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Sherried sprout & savoy gratin

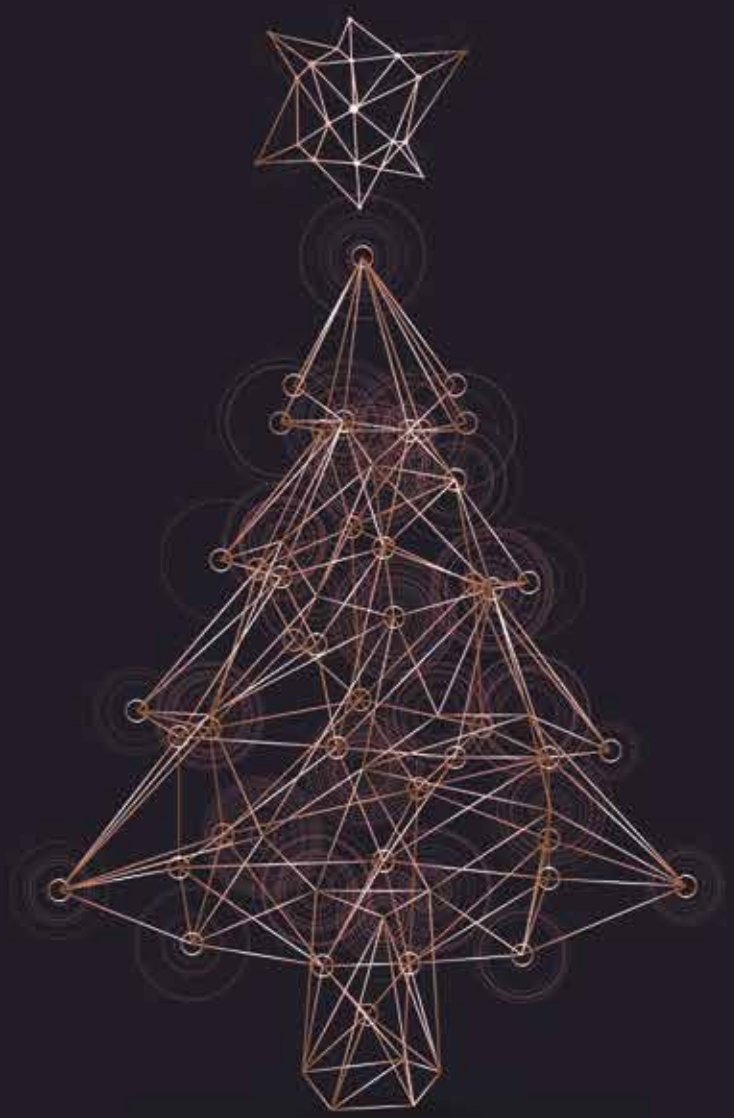
SERVES 10 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 40 mins **EASY**

1 large savoy cabbage, cut into 10 wedges
400g Brussels sprouts, trimmed
3 tbsp olive oil
2 fat garlic cloves, chopped
4 thyme sprigs, leaves picked
75g butter
75g plain flour
150ml fino sherry
600ml whole milk
300ml double cream
nutmeg, grated
60g dried breadcrumbs
60g hard cheese, grated (parmesan, comté or pecorino all work well)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Toss the cabbage wedges and sprouts with the oil, garlic and thyme in a large gratin dish. Season well, then roast for 25 mins.
2 Meanwhile, melt the butter in a saucepan. Stir in the flour and cook for a couple of mins until it begins to turn golden. Remove from the heat then, whisking constantly, gradually pour in the sherry, followed by the milk and cream. Put the sauce back on the heat and cook for 3-4 mins, whisking constantly, until you have a thick sauce. Grate in a generous amount of nutmeg, season well and set aside. Mix the breadcrumbs with the cheese.
3 Take the sprouts and cabbage out of the oven, pour over the sauce and top with the cheesy breadcrumbs. *Can be made a day ahead, and then reheated.* Heat grill to 200C and grill the gratin for 15 mins until the top is golden and crisp. Leave to stand for 5 mins before serving.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • vit c • 1 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 401 kcals • fat 30g • saturates 17g • carbs 18g • sugars 7g • fibre 4g • protein 9g • salt 0.5g





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All the sauces

No Christmas meal is complete without gravy, cranberry sauce or bread sauce. Here are our 2017 versions, each with a modern twist

Turkey & chestnut gravy

SERVES 4 PREP 10 mins COOK 30 mins EASY ❄

If you use goose fat or butter to make this, it can be made ahead and chilled or frozen.

- pan juices from the turkey roasting tin (see pages 59, 63 and 68) or 2 tbsp goose fat or butter
- raw turkey giblets
- 1 tbsp plain flour
- 200ml dry white wine
- 500ml chicken stock
- 1 thyme sprig
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 tbsp chestnut purée

1 Once the turkey has cooked and is resting on a board, carefully pour the juices from the roasting tin into a large heatproof jug. Leave to settle, then pour all of the fat into a separate jug. Put 2 tbsp fat in a saucepan and carefully dispose of the rest. If you have lots of pan juices left after skimming the fat off, substitute this for some of the chicken stock. Alternatively, put the goose fat or butter in a saucepan.

2 Put the saucepan with the fat in on the heat and add the giblets. Cook for 10 mins or until golden, then add the flour. Cook for 2-3 mins, then add the white wine and stir well. Pour in the chicken stock, then add the thyme and bay. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 25-30 mins or until reduced by half, then stir in the chestnut purée.

3 Strain the gravy into a jug, discard the herbs and giblets, season and serve with turkey.

PER SERVING 142 kcals • fat 7g • saturates 2g • carbs 7g • sugars 1g • fibre 1g • protein 4g • salt 0.8g

Sloe gin cranberry sauce

SERVES 6-8 PREP 5 mins COOK 5 mins EASY V ❄

- 60g light soft brown sugar
- 250g pack fresh cranberries
- 100ml sloe gin
- 4 juniper berries

Put all the ingredients in a saucepan. Bring up to a simmer and cook for 5 mins, then take off the heat and leave to cool. *Can be chilled for up to four days or frozen for two months.* Serve at room temperature.

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • low fat • gluten free

PER SERVING 69 kcals • fat none • saturates none • carbs 8g • sugars 8g • fibre 1g • protein none • salt none

gf tip

This recipe also works with frozen cranberries, just cook the mixture for 5-8 mins more, or until the cranberries are soft and the mixture is syrupy.

Sourdough bread sauce

SERVES 6-8 PREP 5 mins COOK 25 mins EASY V ❄

- 80g sourdough bread (around 2 slices)
- 2 large shallots, peeled and root cut off
- 12 cloves
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 3 black peppercorns
- 500ml whole milk
- 1 tsp dark rye flour or wholemeal flour
- 25g butter
- ½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- 50ml double cream
- 50ml buttermilk
- thyme leaves (optional)

1 Blitz the bread to crumbs in a food processor and stud the shallots with the cloves. Put the shallots in a saucepan with the bay leaves, peppercorns and milk. Heat gently for 20 mins, then pour the mixture through a sieve into a clean pan and discard the aromatics.

2 Heat the infused milk until simmering, then add the flour, breadcrumbs, butter and nutmeg. Add the cream and buttermilk, and season well. Cook for 6-8 mins more or until the sauce has thickened. *Can be made up to two days ahead or frozen for two months.* Reheat gently on the hob before serving, and sprinkle over the thyme leaves, if using

PER SERVING (8) 134 kcals • fat 9g • saturates 5g • carbs 10g • sugars 4g • fibre 1g • protein 4g • salt 0.3g




Chestnut purée adds depth to both the texture and flavour
Sloe gin adds a quick, fabulous kick to cranberry sauce
Using sourdough gives bread sauce a satisfying, complex flavour

Let's talk turkey

Everything you need to know for a perfectly cooked and served bird

HOW BIG A TURKEY SHOULD I BUY?

Unless you are keen on leftovers, and you should consider how much room you will have in your fridge, then try to buy the right size turkey for the number of people you want to serve. A boned turkey, turkey crown or breast roast will leave you with fewer leftovers and waste as well as being quicker to cook.

2-2.5kg	SERVES 4-6
3kg	SERVES 6-7
3.5kg	SERVES 7-8
4-4.5kg	SERVES 8-10
5-5.5kg	SERVES 10-12
6-6.5kg	SERVES 12-15

WHICH BIRD TO BUY

Choose a turkey to suit the tastes of your family. Look out for Bronze, Norfolk black and Narragansett heritage varieties if you like a more gamey flavour, but do check cooking timings as they vary for this type of bird. If no one likes dark leg meat and everyone wants breast, then invest in a larger crown instead.

TWEET YOUR TURKEY

Which one did you choose? Tweet us *@bbcgoodfoodme*



HOW DO I KNOW WHEN IT IS COOKED PROPERLY?

The best way to tell if your turkey is cooked is by using a digital cooking thermometer. When cooked, turkey thighs should read 80C, breasts 75C. Always double-check by sticking the probe in several different spots within the thigh or breast, to find the lowest reading. If returning to the oven, allow 10-15 minutes, then test again until the correct temperature is reached.

Without a thermometer, the classic way to test is to push a spoon under the turkey leg so that it pierces the skin (or use a skewer), and inspect the juices that collect in the spoon. The juices should be pale gold and clear; if there are traces of blood, return to the oven as above.

RESTING TIME

It is essential to rest your turkey for 30-45 minutes before carving (the temperature will continue to rise, but there's no need to test). Put the bird in a warm place, tented with foil. It won't get cold – but it will become juicier, and easier to carve.



INTRODUCING:

Versailles Brunch

at BQ – French Kitchen & Bar, The St. Regis Dubai

Reliving past traditions in modern day, the Versailles Brunch celebrates the love of food in a truly fashionable and inspiring setting, every Friday at The St. Regis Dubai





Put on your Friday best and head down to BQ - French Kitchen & Bar to enjoy a feast for both the fashion eye and appetite.

Fridays at the venue now have a whole new feel, as the Versailles Brunch unveils a new menu worth getting out of bed for. Keep an eye out for talented chefs around the dining room flaunting their prime 72-hour-slow-cooked beef, carved to order at an interactive station, and not forgetting the indulgent live foie gras trolley.

Reviving staple brunch favourites with a fresh seafood and live oyster bar that offers the best Fin de Claire oysters, newly appointed Chef de Cuisine Cornelia Sühr has curated a delectable menu that offers decadent sharing-style crudités, appetisers, main courses as well as a mouth-watering dessert selection, set to satisfy all your weekend cravings.

And it does not end there. The post brunch comedown is a thing of the past as the brunch festivities carry on till 5.30pm with a special 'after-brunch' offer. Where you can stay and play at one of two destinations: the luxurious Champagne Lounge or the St. Regis Bar, where you can enjoy a 40% discount on select beverages.

Fridays at The St. Regis Dubai have just become fit for Kings & Queens with the launch of the Versailles Brunch.

Versailles Brunch

Every Friday, 12.30 – 3.30pm

- **Dhs350** - Haute package, includes brunch buffet and soft beverages
- **Dhs550** - Couture package, includes brunch buffet and house beverages
- **Dhs650** - Versailles package, includes brunch buffet, house beverages and bubbly

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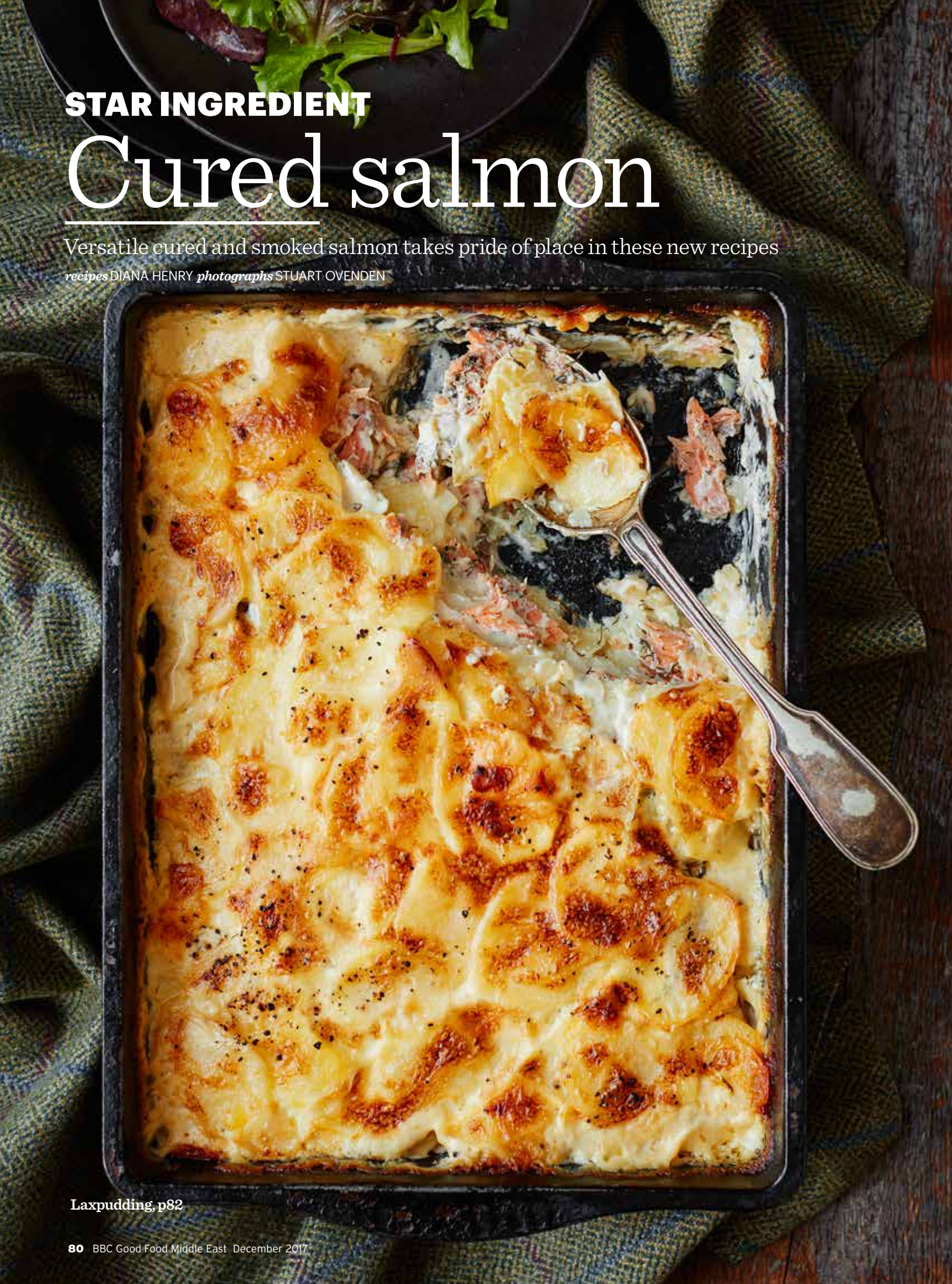
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STAR INGREDIENT

Cured salmon

Versatile cured and smoked salmon takes pride of place in these new recipes

recipes DIANA HENRY *photographs* STUART OVENDEN



Laxpudding, p82



Fresh & smoked salmon rillettes, p82



Good Food contributing editor Diana Henry is an award-winning food writer. Her tenth book, *Simple* (Dhs125, Mitchell Beazley), is out now. Each month she creates exclusive recipes using seasonal ingredients.
@ *DianaHenryFood*

The first meal I eat when I get to Ireland is always smoked salmon. It's a tradition that mum greets us with a platter of the stuff, buttered wheaten bread and wedges of lemon. My response to the peaty smell of smoked salmon is almost Pavlovian – my mouth waters and I slide into celebratory mode.

Smoked salmon is all about celebrations. The really good stuff is expensive, and used to be kept for Christmas and any event where champagne corks were popped. Quality smoked salmon provides high-end, easy eating.

It's great in a warm potato salad (drizzle with a dill & buttermilk dressing) or with warm buckwheat blinis, soured cream and salmon roe.

Scandinavian gravadlax –cured with salt and sugar rather than smoke – was one of the first 'fancy' dishes I ever made. There was very good salmon fishing where I grew up in Northern Ireland, so I had to think of different things to do with it. Reading about it in Jane Grigson's *Book of European Cookery*, I fell for the idea of burying a side of salmon under a crusty avalanche of sea salt. The process of making it was so pleasurable (mix salt, sugar, pepper and pine-scented handfuls of dill) and the method so simple (apply the cure, wrap and weight the fish), that I've made it regularly ever since. Like smoked salmon, it's a great dish to have in the fridge over Christmas.

If I'm going to serve gravadlax plain, I make my own. For dishes such as the laxpudding, I'm happy to use bought stuff. When it comes to smoked salmon, I usually buy Irish (but only out of loyalty). Both smoked salmon and gravadlax provide easy luxury, but you need to buy the best you can afford.



Laxpudding

Not, as it sounds, a pudding made with gravadlax, but a potato gratin with dill and gravadlax layered and baked. This very easy recipe is a good post-Christmas dish. You could also try adding some sliced beetroot and of course you could make this with smoked salmon if that's what you have.

SERVES 8 **PREP** 20 mins
COOK 1 hr 20 mins **EASY**

425ml double cream
150ml soured cream
100ml full-fat milk
1.2kg potatoes (I like Maris Piper), peeled and finely sliced
butter, for greasing
400g gravadlax
15g bunch dill, chopped (leaves only)
green salad with a sharp dressing, to serve

1 Heat oven to 180C/160 fan/gas 4. In a large saucepan, mix together the creams and the milk, and bring to just under the boil. Add the potatoes and cook gently for 5 mins, gently turning the potatoes over from time to time.
2 Season well and spoon one-third of the potatoes into a greased deep dish. Put half the gravadlax and dill on top, then add another one-third of the potatoes, then the rest of the gravadlax and dill. Finish with a final layer of potatoes.
3 Bake for 1 hr 10 mins or until the vegetables are completely tender. You may need to cover the top with foil after 1 hr to stop it becoming too dark. Serve with a green salad with a sharp dressing (the laxpudding will benefit from something clean to contrast with the richness of this dish).

GOOD TO KNOW omega-3 • gluten free
PER SERVING 520 kcals • fat 37g • saturates 21g • carbs 28g • sugars 4g • fibre 2g • protein 17g • salt 1.1g



Fresh & smoked salmon rillettes

A simple starter, fresh and rich, that makes a bit more of a pack of smoked salmon, and of course you could make this with smoked salmon if that's what you have.

SERVES 6 **PREP** 20 mins
COOK 15 mins **EASY**

150ml vermouth
½ onion, sliced
2 tbsp lemon juice, plus a squeeze
small bunch parsley, stalks only (use the leaves below)
8 black peppercorns
280g salmon fillet
125g smoked salmon, cut into small shreds
30g butter, melted
1 tbsp chopped chervil (or chives if you can't get chervil)
rye bread and chicory leaves, to serve (optional)
For the caper crème fraîche
200g crème fraîche
2 tbsp finely chopped parsley and chives
2 tbsp capers, rinsed of salt or brine
1 small shallot, finely chopped
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
lemon juice, to taste

1 Put the vermouth, onion, lemon juice, parsley stalks and peppercorns in a saucepan with 150ml water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 mins. Turn the heat down to a very gentle simmer, add the salmon fillet and poach for 4 mins. Let the salmon sit and cool in the liquid.
2 Lift the salmon out of its poaching liquid, remove the skin and flake the flesh roughly. Mix the flesh with the smoked salmon, a good squeeze of lemon, the butter, chervil and some pepper. Tip into a bowl, cover and put in the fridge (be sure to bring it back to room temperature to serve).
3 Mix the crème fraîche with the herbs, capers, shallot, oil and lemon juice to taste. Serve the rillettes with leaves of chicory – its bitterness is very good against the richness of the salmon – the caper crème fraîche and some rye bread, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW omega-3 • gluten free
PER SERVING 339 kcals • fat 26g • saturates 13g • carbs 3g • sugars 3g • fibre 1g • protein 17g • salt 0.8g

Food styling SAL HENLEY | Styling JENNIFER KAY



Gravadlax with celeriac & fennel salad

SERVES 8 **PREP** 40 mins
NO COOK

350-400g gravadlax or smoked salmon
For the dressing
1 tsp wholegrain mustard
1½ tsp honey
2 garlic cloves, crushed
5 tsp cider vinegar
7 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (a fruity one, not a bitter Tuscan one)
2 tbsp single cream
For the salad
juice 1 lemon (you may not need it all)
300g celeriac
1 large fennel bulb
¼ red onion
1 small red apple
1 small green apple
15g bunch dill, leaves only, roughly chopped

1 Make the dressing first. Put the mustard, honey, garlic, vinegar and some seasoning in a cup, and whisk in the oil in a steady stream. Stir in the cream, then check the seasoning – it should be sweet-sour.
2 Put some of the lemon juice in a mixing bowl. Peel the celeriac and cut the flesh into matchsticks, tossing these in the lemon juice as you go to stop the flesh discolouring.
3 Quarter the fennel and remove any coarse outer leaves. Trim the tips, reserving any tufty fronds. Cut out the core from each piece. Using a very sharp knife or a mandolin, slice the fennel lengthways – the slices should be almost transparent. Toss with the celeriac and add some more lemon juice.
4 Cut the onion as finely as possible (it's best to do this on a mandolin too). Halve the apples, core and cut into matchsticks (there's no need to peel them). Add to the bowl with the onions, and add a little more lemon juice (to keep the apple from turning brown). Chop any fennel fronds and add along with the dill. Toss with the dressing.
5 Divide the salad between eight plates with some gravadlax alongside, or serve the gravadlax and offer the salad in a large bowl.

GOOD TO KNOW omega-3 • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING 227 kcals • fat 15g • saturates 3g • carbs 7g • sugars 6g • fibre 3g • protein 14g • salt 1.2g

Party *starters*

Small, perfectly formed and delicious, these recipes can all be served in more than one way and will delight your friends and family

photographs TOM REGESTER



Good Food contributing editor Rosie Birkett is a food writer and stylist. Her cookbook, *A Lot on Her Plate*, is out now (Dhs125, Hardie Grant). @*rosiefoodie*

Caraway oatcakes with stilton & damson jam



Buckwheat & spelt chrain blinis

Being a cook can be making a rod for your own back when it comes to festivities – be it Christmas, Easter, friends' birthdays, or celebrations of any kind. If like me, you're the cook of the family or friendship group, you'd better hammer that wreath firmly in, as the chances are you'll end up with a revolving door at this time of year, welcoming groups large and small, and constantly needing to have good things to feed them. Of course, I wouldn't have it any other way, so here are some of my favourite things to eat at Christmas. May the feasting begin!

Buckwheat & spelt chrain blinis

These blinis are perfect for a party, because they are bright pink and wonderfully light. I use traditional buckwheat, along with spelt flour for really fluffy blinis and yogurt to give them a good sour flavour, which works nicely with the smoked fish and dill. Make these ahead and heat them up as a hassle-free party canapé or plated as a starter. They also freeze really well.

MAKES about 35-40 blinis **PREP** 15 mins plus 2 hrs resting **COOK** 15 mins **MORE EFFORT** ❄

50g buckwheat flour
120g light spelt flour
7g fast action dried yeast
125ml milk
200g natural yogurt
2 medium eggs, separated
1 ready-to-eat beetroot blended with 30g horseradish, or 2 tbsp chrain (beetroot and horseradish purée)
20g clarified butter
soured cream, smoked trout, dill and salmon roe (optional), to serve

1 Sift the buckwheat and spelt flours into a bowl with 1 tsp salt and scatter over the yeast. Heat the milk and yogurt very gently until tepid, then whisk in the egg yolks. Whisk this mixture into the flour mix and leave for 1 hr to ferment.
2 Whisk the egg whites to stiff peaks. Stir the beetroot and horseradish purée through the batter, then lightly fold in the egg whites. Leave for a further hour.
3 Heat the clarified butter in a non-stick frying pan, then add in dessertspoonfuls of blini mix. Fry for about 40 seconds, or until they naturally come away from the pan when you shake it. They should puff up, and you'll need to be careful when turning over as the middle might try and escape a bit – I use a palette knife. Turn over and fry for another 20-30 seconds, then transfer to kitchen paper. Continue with the rest of the mix. *Leave to cool, then freeze the blinis for up to one month.*
4 When your blinis are done, top with the soured cream, smoked trout, dill and roe, if using.

PER BLINI (40) 30 kcals • fat 1g • saturates 1g • carbs 3g • sugars 1g • fibre none • protein 1g • salt 0.2g

Caraway oatcakes with stilton & damson jam

Cheese is such a staple at Christmas, it's worth going to the effort of making a biscuit for it that you can keep in an airtight container and bust out when friends appear at your table. I love oatcakes, and lacing them with fragrant caraway seeds brings another dimension to the cheeseboard. Serve these as a final canapé at a party or instead of a cheeseboard at dinner.

MAKES about 20 biscuits **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 25 mins **EASY** V

80g butter
100g jumbo rolled oats
100g normal oats
60g light spelt flour, plus extra for dusting
1 tsp sea salt
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp golden caster sugar
1 tbsp caraway seeds
Stilton & damson jam, to serve

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Gently melt the butter. Combine the oats, spelt flour, salt, baking powder, sugar and seeds in a bowl. Pour in the melted butter and stir to combine, coating all of the oats. Add up to 80ml boiling water, a little at a time, until you have a dough that holds together.
2 Lightly dust a work surface with flour and turn out the dough, rolling out to 0.5cm thickness. Using a 5cm round cutter, cut out your biscuits and place on a lined baking tray. Bake for 20-25 mins until crisp and golden, then remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack. *Can be made one day ahead and kept in an airtight container.* To serve, spread with butter and top with Stilton and a dollop of damson jam.

PER BISCUIT (20) 82 kcals • fat 4g • saturates 2g • carbs 9g • sugars none • fibre 1g • protein 2g • salt 0.4g

Seared venison with sprout & apple slaw

Venison is such a seasonal treat, Christmas is the perfect excuse to cook it and treat your guests to its rich and gamey flavours. This is super-quick to cook and the resulting venison is incredibly tender, and lifted by the nutty, citrussy sprout slaw. Serve this as a dinner party starter, but it would also make a festive light lunch.

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 15 mins plus 2 hrs marinating
COOK 25 mins **EASY**

400g venison loin
for the marinade
2 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
2 juniper berries, crushed
2 rosemary sprigs, leaves picked and chopped
½ tsp fino or balsamic vinegar
for the slaw
200g Brussels sprouts, finely shredded
juice and zest of ½ orange
1 tbsp rapeseed oil, plus extra for frying
1 green apple
bunch of parsley, finely chopped
seeds from ½ pomegranate
crème fraîche mixed with horseradish and 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds, toasted (optional), to serve

1 Mix the marinade ingredients together and marinate the venison for a couple of hours in the fridge. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. For the slaw, put the sprouts in a bowl and pour over the orange juice. Season with salt and drizzle over some rapeseed oil. Using your hands, scrunch the sprouts in the dressing for a few minutes to tenderise them. Grate in the apple, allowing the juice to also dress the sprouts, then toss with the remaining ingredients. Check for seasoning and add more rapeseed oil if you think it needs it. It wants to be perfectly dressed, rather than greasy.
2 Heat a little rapeseed oil in a heavy-bottomed skillet or frying pan until smoking hot, then add the venison and cook for 2-3 mins until a caramelised crust has formed on the underside. Flip it over and cook for another couple of mins, making sure it's sealed all over. Place on a baking sheet and put in the oven for 5-6 mins, depending on how rare you like it. Remove from the oven and allow to rest for at least 5 mins, then slice. Spread some crème fraîche and horseradish over each plate and top with then venison. Serve the slaw on the side and scatter over the seeds, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • vit c • iron • 1 of 5-a-day • good for you • gluten free
PER SERVING (4) 254 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 2g • carbs 9g • sugars 8g • fibre 5g • protein 26g • salt 0.3g



Beetroot & blackberry cured salmon

A festive classic, curing your own salmon is well worth it for taste, satisfaction and wow-factor. This version uses beetroot and berries to give it a stunning pink-purple hue and slightly sweet flavour. Serve it plated as a starter or on crackers as a canapé .

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 10 mins plus 3 days curing **NO COOK** **EASY**

800-1kg side of salmon, pin-boned and scaled

for the cure

90g brown sugar
125g sea salt
80g blackberries or elderberries
2 raw beetroots, peeled and chopped
3 juniper berries, crushed
4 tbsp gin

for the herb coating

1 bunch of dill, finely chopped
6 white peppercorns, crushed
1 tbsp freshly grated horseradish
2 tbsp gin

1 In a food processor, combine the ingredients for the beetroot and berry cure. Unravel some cling film but keep it attached to the roll. Spoon a bit of the cure on the cling film then lay the salmon, skin-side down, on top and pack the rest of cure over the flesh. Roll the fish tightly in cling film to create a package. Place the package in a shallow baking dish or shallow-sided tray and lay another tray on top. Weigh the tray down with a couple a tins and place in the fridge for two days, turning the salmon over occasionally.
2 On the second day, remove the salmon from its wrapping and scrape off any excess cure. Gently rinse the remaining cure off the salmon and pat dry with kitchen towel. In a bowl, combine the chopped dill with the peppercorns, horseradish and gin. Prepare another piece of cling film for the salmon and cover all over with the herb mix. Wrap the salmon up again as before. Place in the baking tray, weigh it down and leave, for at least another eight hours. Remove the salmon from its wrapping and transfer to a board. Finely slice and serve with sourdough crackers and pickles. *Will keep in the fridge for two-three days.*

GOOD TO KNOW omega-3 • gluten free
PER SERVING (6) 396 kcals • fat 25g • saturates 5g • carbs 3g • sugars 3g • fibre 1g • protein 34g • salt 3.87g



Duck liver parfait, cherry compote & sourdough croutes

Nothing shouts Christmas to me like jars of rich, slightly boozy parfait strewn across the table for people to dip into. These smooth, creamy parfaits balance rich, earthy duck liver with a hint of Grand Marnier and are topped with morello cherry jam. Serve smears on toast as a canapé or let people help themselves at a dinner party or buffet.

MAKES two small jars **SERVES** 10 as a canapé
PREP 20mins plus cooling and setting **COOK** 35 mins
EASY

100g butter, extra for frying
3 shallots, finely chopped
2 thyme sprigs, leaves picked
½ tsp white peppercorns, crushed
pinch of coriander seeds, crushed
400g duck livers, trimmed of sinew and roughly chopped
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
80ml madeira
freshly ground nutmeg and ground black pepper
1 tbsp Grand Marnier

for the cherry glaze

80g morello cherry jam
1 tsp sherry vinegar

for the sourdough croutes

8 slices of sourdough, cut into bite-sized pieces (if making canapés)
olive oil
sea salt
thyme leaves

1 Heat a piece of the butter in a frying pan. Once melted and sizzling, add the shallots, thyme, peppercorns and coriander seeds with a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring, for 3-4 mins, until the shallots begin to colour, then turn up the heat slightly, add the livers and cinnamon and cook for 3-4 mins. Splash in the madeira and bubble until reduced by about half. Transfer to a bowl to cool and grate over some fresh nutmeg.
2 Once cool, transfer the mix to a blender, add the butter and Grand Marnier and blitz. Check for seasoning, then pass through a fine sieve. Pour into ramekins or small bowls, leaving a gap for the cherry topping, and place in the fridge to set.
3 To make the cherry glaze, very gently melt down 80g of the cherry compote with the vinegar and a pinch of salt. Allow to cool slightly, then top the pâtés with the cherry mix. Return to the fridge to set for a couple more hours. *Can be made up to two days in advance.*
4 To make the sourdough croutes, heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Toss your sourdough with a really generous pinch of salt, a good drizzle of olive oil and the thyme leaves. Roast in the oven for 15-20 mins until crisp and golden. *The croutes can be made a day ahead and kept in an airtight container.* Let guests spread the parfait over of the croutes and enjoy.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • iron
PER SERVING (10) 288 kcals • fat 12g • saturates 6g • carbs29g • sugars 8g • fibre 1g • protein 12g • salt 1.1g

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Duck liver parfait, cherry compote & sourdough croutes, p88



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Celeriac & comté fritters

I'm going to confess, I'm rather obsessed with celeriac. It has such an interesting, elegantly savoury flavour. Combined with nutty, melty comté and crunchy pumpkin seeds, these little patties are irresistible and satisfying as either a starter or light lunch or supper.

SERVES 2-4 **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 15 mins
MORE EFFORT

- 4 quail's eggs
- 200g celeriac, peeled and coarsely grated
- 1 green apple, grated
- 1 tbsp tarragon or chervil, roughly chopped
- 6 sage leaves, chopped
- 100g comté cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- pinch of chilli flakes
- 1 tbsp rapeseed oil, plus extra for frying
- 1 tbsp butter
- bunch of parsley, leaves picked
- ½ red onion
- white wine vinegar
- celery salt

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put the quail's eggs in a bowl of warm tap water to get them used to the change in temperature. Then bring about an inch of water to the boil in a saucepan and prepare a bowl with some iced water. Gently lower the quails eggs into the boiling water and boil for 2 mins, then drop them into the iced water. Leave them in there until chilled. Carefully peel and set aside.

2 Toss the celeriac, apple, herbs and cheese together with the pumpkin seeds, chilli flakes and season. Combine the egg yolk with the Dijon and stir into the celeriac mixture. Whisk the egg white to stiff peaks and fold into the celeriac fritter mix.

3 Heat a little rapeseed oil and butter in a non-stick frying pan. Put two dessertspoonfuls of fritter into the hot fat and fry for 1 min or until a caramelised crust has formed. Turn carefully and cook for a further 2 mins. Place on a lined baking sheet and bake for 5 mins. Remove from the oven and allow to settle on the sheet for a couple of mins. Dress the parsley and red onion with the vinegar and rapeseed oil. Divide between plates and top with the quail's eggs and celery salt. Serve with the parsley salad.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • vit c • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING (4) 311 kcals • fat 24g • saturates 8g • carbs 6g • sugars 4g • fibre 5g • protein 14g • salt 1.3g



Shoot director and stylist SARAH BIRKS | Food stylist ROSIE BIRKETT

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RAYMOND BLANC'S

Three-ingredient roast duck

Follow BBC chef **Raymond Blanc's** steps to the perfect alternative Christmas roast

photographs TOM REGESTER



Browning the duck slowly in the pan before roasting is key to cooking it evenly

A whole roast duck is often a thing of beauty... until you carve into it and realise the thigh meat is beautifully tender and melting but the breast meat is completely overcooked. For me, I feel you need to find that perfect compromise, so I have created this recipe to keep as much moisture in the breast meat, while cooking the thigh meat long enough. Bon appétit!

Raymond Blanc is chef-patron of Belmond Le Manoir, which has held two Michelin stars for over 30 years. @raymond_blanc



“I come from a region of rugged mountains, so my childhood Christmases were always white. I have wonderful memories of being together as a family and enjoying food like this”

Orange marmalade glazed roast duck

Making a deep cut inside the body into each leg helps them cook quicker.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 40 mins **EASY**

1 oven-ready duck, about 1kg
2 oranges, halved
60g Seville orange marmalade

GOOD TO KNOW vit c • gluten free
PER SERVING 845 kcals • fat 71g • saturates 21g • carbs 15g • sugars 15g • fibre 1g • protein 37g • salt 0.5g



1 Expose and cut out the wishbone. This makes the duck easier to carve once cooked. A butcher can do this for you.



2 Heat oven to 240C/220C fan/gas 9. Lightly score the skin on the duck all over, and make a deep cut from inside the body into each leg.



3 Season the duck well. Heat an ovenproof frying pan over a low heat. Hold the duck on it’s side using tongs and sizzle for 10 mins, until browned. Turn and cook on the other side for 10 mins more.



4 Turn the duck breast-side down, then transfer the pan to the oven and cook for 5 mins. Drain the fat from the pan, keep the duck breast-side down, and continue to roast for 10 mins.



5 Meanwhile, cut both oranges in half, then cut 4 wedges from half an orange. Heat a small frying pan over a medium heat, then cook the orange wedges in the dry pan for 1 min on each side to lightly caramelise.



6 Remove the orange wedges from the pan and set aside. Squeeze the juice from the remaining orange halves into the hot pan and reduce by half. Add the marmalade, take off the heat and stir together.



7 After 15 mins of roasting, turn the duck over and brush the marmalade glaze over and continue to roast for a final 10 mins. Rest for 20 mins.



8 Carve by cutting the leg and thigh away, then separating the leg from the thigh. Carve slices of breast and serve with the oranges wedges to squeeze over..

Shoot director MARTIN TOPPING | Food stylist ADAM JOHNSON



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recipes BARNEY DESMAZERY *photographs* DAVID MUNNS



Menu for 6-8

Faux gras with toast & pickles

Twice-cooked beef short ribs with dripping carrots & gravy

Smoked mash

Buttermilk caramel puddings





Twice-cooked beef short ribs with dripping carrots & gravy

Short ribs are becoming more readily available and are usually sold individually. To make the prep easier, I've kept them as a whole rack, so you may need to order them from your butcher in advance.

SERVES 6-8 **PREP** 20 mins plus cooling and overnight chilling
COOK 4 hrs 20 mins **EASY** ❄

vegetable oil, for frying
2 racks of beef short ribs (4 bones each)
750ml bottle red grape
8 carrots, peeled but left whole
2 tbsp red onion marmalade
large bunch parsley, chopped

1 At least one day before eating, slow-cook the ribs. Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. If you have a flameproof roasting tin, then heat it with the oil and brown the seasoned fleshy sides of the ribs well. If not, do this in a frying pan and transfer the ribs to a roasting tin, flesh-side down. Nestle the whole carrots among the ribs and pour over all the wine. Cover the roasting tin tightly with foil and put in the oven for 4 hrs, turning any carrots that aren't submerged in the wine halfway through.
2 When cooked, leave to cool, then transfer the ribs and carrots to a tray, pouring the cooking juices into a bowl. Cover and chill everything overnight. *Can be prepared up to two days ahead.*
3 To finish the dish, heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Sit the ribs in a roasting tin, bone-side down, and roast for 25 mins until very brown, sizzling and crisp around the edges.
4 Meanwhile, lift the solidified dripping off the sauce and melt half in a frying pan until gently sizzling. Add the carrots and gently fry to reheat. Season with sea salt, toss through the parsley and lift the carrots out of the fat into a serving dish.
5 Pour the sauce into a saucepan with the red onion marmalade and bring to the boil. Skim off any froth and continue to boil and stir until you have a sticky gravy. Serve everything together on a large board with the racks piled on top of each other and a few ribs carved away to start with.

GOOD TO KNOW vit c • iron • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING (8) 524 kcals • fat 29g • saturates 13g • carbs 7g • sugars 6g • fibre 3g • protein 40g • salt 0.3g

Smoked mash

SERVES 6-8 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 30 mins **EASY** **V** ❄

1.5kg floury potatoes (such as Maris Pipers or King Edwards), cut into large chunks
200ml milk
50g butter
smoked sea salt, plus extra to serve (optional)

1 Boil the potatoes in a large pan of water for 20-25 mins until mashable. Drain well.
2 In the same saucepan (no need to clean it), bring the milk, butter and a couple of pinches of smoked sea salt to the boil. Take off the heat and either rice or mash the potatoes into the hot milk, beating until completely combined. Serve alongside the short ribs and carrots, with extra smoked salt on the side to season, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING (8) 204 kcals • fat 6g • saturates 4g • carbs 32g • sugars 3g • fibre 3g • protein 4g • salt 1.1g

Food styling KATY GILHOOLY | Styling LUIS PERAL

Faux gras with toast & pickles

With only two ingredients, this is the easiest parfait you'll ever make. If you have a smoothie bullet blender, it'll give you the most velvety result.

SERVES 6-8 **PREP** 15 mins plus chilling **COOK** 8 mins **EASY** ❄

100g butter, softened
300g organic chicken or duck livers, trimmed, cleaned and patted dry
To serve
sliced brioche or sourdough
cornichons
chutney
sea salt flakes

1 Heat 50g butter in a frying pan until sizzling, add the livers and fry for 4 mins until coloured on the outside and slightly pink in the middle. Leave to cool, then tip the contents of the pan into a food processor or a smoothie bullet blender. Season generously with salt and add the remaining butter. Blitz until you have a smooth purée, then scrape into a container, smooth over the top and place in the fridge to chill for at least 2 hrs. *Can be made a day ahead.*

2 To serve, griddle slices of brioche or sourdough, and tip some cornichons and chutney into small pots. Put a large spoon in a cup of hot water. As if serving ice cream, scoop a spoonful of the faux gras onto each plate, dipping the spoon into the water after each scoop. Sprinkle a few salt flakes over each scoop and serve with the toasts, cornichons and chutney.

GOOD TO KNOW folate
PER SERVING (8) 127 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 7g • carbs none • sugars none • fibre none • protein 7g • salt 0.3g



Buttermilk caramel puddings

A foolproof make-ahead spin on a crème caramel, made with just five ingredients.

SERVES 6-8 **PREP** 15 mins plus soaking, cooling and setting
COOK 15 mins **MORE EFFORT**

350g white caster sugar
3 sheets leaf gelatine
600ml double cream
1 vanilla pod, split and seeds scrapped out
284ml pot buttermilk

1 You'll need 6-8 dariole moulds or small individual pudding basins. Tip 150g of the sugar into a shallow pan and place over a medium heat. Cook the sugar until dissolved and turning to a light amber caramel. While it is still hot, carefully pour the caramel over the base of the moulds, tipping them around so some caramel also sticks to the sides. Set aside.
2 Soak the gelatine in very cold water for about 10 mins to soften. Tip the cream, remaining sugar and the vanilla pod and seeds into a saucepan. Place on the heat, stirring to combine and dissolve the sugar. Bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally, then remove from the heat. Add the drained, squeezed gelatine leaves and stir to dissolve, then leave to cool. When tepid, remove and squeeze out the vanilla pod, stir in the buttermilk, then strain everything into a jug. Share the mixture between the moulds, then place in the fridge for at least a couple of hours, or preferably overnight to set. *Can be made up to three days ahead.*
3 To serve, dip the bases of the moulds briefly into very hot water until the fillings just come away from the sides. When you are confident that it will turn out, place a serving plate over the mould and carefully turn, allowing the contents to drop out onto the plate, scooping out any caramel sauce left in the mould and drizzling over the puddings. Serve immediately.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING (8) 562 kcals • fat 40g • saturates 25g • carbs 47g • sugars 47g • fibre none • protein 3g • salt 0.1g

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Christmas cake *your way*

3 ways to decorate

Fruitcake, much as we love it, has taken a back seat for Christmas this year – in 2017, the sponge rules. Ours is flavoured with orange, layered with cranberry compote and covered with a white chocolate cream cheese frosting. This gorgeous cake can be iced in different ways, so pick your favourite *recipe* CASSIE BEST *photographs* MYLES NEW



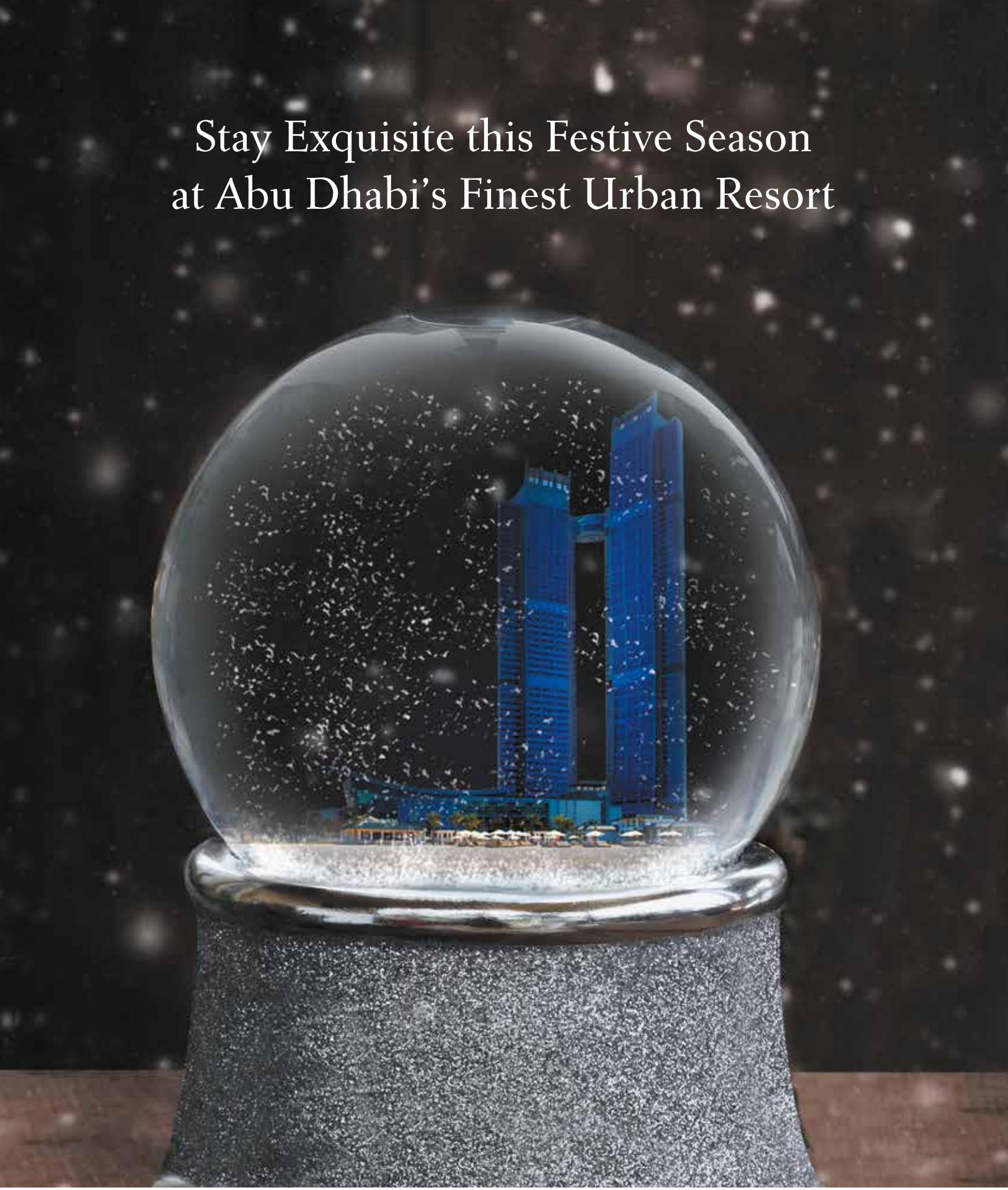
Make this recipe suit you

The cakes for this recipe are not difficult to make, though they are softer than some sponges, so handle them carefully. Each cake pictured here uses four sponges, but there is nothing to stop you using half the recipe and only making two. You won't get the same height, but you'll still have an amazing looking cake. This cake has a white chocolate and cream cheese frosting so you can't decorate it days in advance as you would a fondant iced cake, otherwise the meringues and sweets will soften. We kept ours for three days in a fridge after we had first cut it and it still tasted and looked good, but the meringues were tender rather than crisp. Turn to page 112 for three ways to decorate – golden snowflake & meringue naked cake, candy cane explosion cake and frosty icicle cake.



Golden snowflake & meringue naked cake, p112

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Candy cane explosion cake, p112



Frosty icicle cake, p112



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FIRST MAKE YOUR CAKE

White chocolate, orange & cranberry cake

You will need a 20cm cake board. If you don't want to make the cranberry compote, then use a cherry compote or jam instead.

SERVES 20-22 PREP 2 hrs plus cooling COOK 1 hr 5 mins
MORE EFFORT V ❄ sponges only

300g salted butter, chopped, plus extra for the tin
200g white chocolate, finely chopped
500g plain flour
4 tsp baking powder
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
500g white caster sugar
300ml natural yogurt
4 tsp vanilla extract
1 large orange, zested and juiced
6 large eggs
4 tbsp milk

for the compote
200g cranberries
150g white caster sugar

for the icing
200g white chocolate, finely chopped
500g salted butter, softened
750g icing sugar, sifted if lumpy
280g cream cheese

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Rub a little butter over the base and sides of two 20cm cake tins (use cake tins rather than sandwich tins as the higher sides work better), then line the base and sides with baking parchment. Melt 150g butter with 100g of the chocolate in a bowl set over a small saucepan of gently simmering water – make sure the base of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir the butter and chocolate every min or so until it has melted. Set aside to cool a little.
2 Meanwhile, measure 250g flour, 2 tsp baking powder, ½ tsp bicarb and 250g sugar in a large bowl. Make a well in the middle and add 150g yogurt, 2 tsp vanilla extract, the orange zest and juice, 3 eggs and 2 tbsp milk. Whisk everything together, then stir in the melted butter and chocolate. When the cake mixture is smooth (this makes a very wet pourable batter), divide it equally between the two cake tins. Bake on the middle shelf for 25-30 mins, they will look golden and evenly risen when cooked. Check they are done by pushing a skewer into the centre of the cakes – it should come out clean. If there is any wet cake mixture on the skewer, return the cake to the oven for a few more mins, then check again.
3 Leave the cakes to cool in their tins for 5 mins, then transfer to a cooling rack. Wash out the tins and repeat steps 1 and 2, to make two more sponges in total. *You can make them a day or two before icing, then wrap them in a double layer of cling film once cool. They can also be frozen for up to two months.*
4 To make the compote, simmer the cranberries and sugar in a small pan for 4-5 mins until jammy, then leave to cool.
5 For the icing, melt the chocolate, either in 20-30 secs bursts in a microwave or in a bowl over simmering water. Set aside to cool a little. Roughly mash the butter and icing sugar together, then beat until smooth with an electric whisk or mixer. Add the chocolate and cream cheese and beat again until smooth.
6 To assemble the cake, place one sponge on a cake board the same size as the sponge, then sandwich the other sponges on top with a little icing and the cranberry compote. Use the cake with the neatest edge, flipped upside down, on top to give your cake a good shape.
7 Pile about half the remaining icing on top of the cake and use a palette knife to spread it thinly over the top and down the sides of the cake. This is a crumb coat, it catches any crumbs, ensuring the final layer looks clean and professional. Chill the cake for 10-20 mins to firm up the icing or leave it somewhere cool for longer. Now decorate the cake. *Will keep for three days.*

PER SERVING (22) 780 kcals • fat 41g • saturates 25g • carbs 94g • sugars 76g • fibre 1g • protein 8g • salt 1.3g

YOU WILL ALSO NEED

- edible decorations
- edible glitter or lustre powder
- edible gold or silver spray (look in supermarket baking aisles, or buy online)
- snowflake cutter (if making decorations for the golden snowflake & meringue naked cake)

Meringue kisses & icicles

If you prefer, you can buy mini meringues and spray them gold or silver. Serve any extras when you slice the cake. Bear in mind that some food colour changes colour when it is cooked so your reds might turn pink.

MAKES about 25 mini meringues PREP 30 mins
COOK 1 hr 50 mins MORE EFFORT

2 egg whites
200g white caster sugar
decoration, depending on the final cake you have chosen
red food colouring paste
50g dark chocolate, melted
edible glitter (available from *cakecraftcompany.com*) or lustre powder (optional)

1 Heat oven to 120C/100C fan/gas ½. Line two-three baking sheets with parchment. Beat the egg whites until they are foamy and doubled in size. Add the sugar, 1 tbsp at a time, while you continue to whisk. The meringue will become thick and glossy and should hold up in stiff peaks on the beaters when it is ready.
2 For the meringue kisses, fit a disposable piping bag with a 1cm round or star nozzle. Hold it vertically to the baking sheet and gently squeeze, pulling the bag up and away to make a peak. If you are making the frosty icicle cake, make some meringue dots as well.
3 For colour-striped meringues, fit a disposable piping bag with a round nozzle, paint red food colouring paste in stripes onto the inside of the bag, then fill with meringue and pipe as before. Bake for 1 hr. Once cool, you can drizzle some of the meringues with melted chocolate and sprinkle with edible glitter or lustre powder, if you like.
4 For the icicles and snowflakes, scoop the meringue into a disposable piping bag and snip off a tiny opening. Pipe spiky icicle shapes onto the trays, making them thicker one end and thin at the other. Pipe crossed lines to make snowflakes. Bake for 50 mins, then leave to cool on the tray for a few mins, then carefully loosen them off the parchment. Sprinkle with edible glitter or lustre powder, if you like. If left to cool completely, they may stick and break when you try to lift them off. *If you are storing these, leave to cool completely, then layer in an airtight container between pieces of baking parchment.*

Shoot director MARTIN TOPPING | Food stylist JULIET SEAR | Stylist TONY HUTCHINSON

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3 WAYS TO DECORATE



Golden snowflake & meringue naked cake

DECORATION 1 hr plus drying time

white fondant icing
edible gold spray or lustre powder
white chocolate icing (see recipe, opposite)
gold leaf (optional)
assorted meringue kisses
edible gold glitter stars and sprinkles

1 Roll out the fondant icing and cut out snowflakes. Leave to dry on baking parchment. When they are dry, spray them gold or brush with lustre powder.
2 Apply a final thin layer of icing over the crumb coat. This is to create a neat finish and a naked cake effect, rather than cover the cake completely.
3 Gently lift pieces of the gold leaf with a knife or paintbrush, if using, and press them gently on the sides and edge of the cake.
4 Arrange the meringue kisses to cover all or some of the top of the cake.
5 Add glitter, gold stars, snowflakes and sprinkles, using a little icing to stick them down. Arrange more meringues around the base of the cake, if you like.



Candy cane explosion cake

DECORATION 30 mins

white chocolate icing
12-14 candy canes, fruit flavoured if you can get them
assorted red and white sweets (we found these sold individually in sweet shops)

Apply a final layer of icing over the crumb coat and give it as neat a finish as possible. Put the cake on a stand, if you like. Smash a couple of the candy canes and sweets and press pieces around the base of the cakes. Stick the remaining canes into the cake at angles, add any remaining whole sweets and sprinkle the rest of the crushed sweets into the gaps.



Frosty icicle cake

DECORATION 30 mins-1 hr

blue food colouring
white chocolate icing
icicles, meringue kisses and snowflakes
silver and pearl balls
icing sugar

1 Add a tiny amount of blue to your remaining icing and beat it in – be very careful adding it or you might end up with too dark a blue. Because the base icing is yellowish, you'll end up with a greeny blue. Apply a final layer of this icing over the crumb coat and give it as neat a finish as possible. Put the cake on a stand, if you like.
2 Use some of the icing to stick icicles carefully around the edge of the cake so they look as if they are dripping down.
3 Arrange the meringue kisses and snowflakes on top of the cake and meringue dots around the outside. Push silver and pearl balls into the icing and dust the cake with a little icing sugar to look like snow.

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Christmas Day Brunch: *Al Bahou	25th December*	*From AED 449*
Boxing Day Brunch: *Mistral	26th December*	*From AED 199*

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Last Evening Brunch of 2017: *Al Bahou	29th December*	*From AED 225*
New Years Eve Gala Dinner: *Al Bahou	31st December*	*From AED 449*
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Craft Duck Waffles

Serves 2



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INGREDIENTS

FOR THE WAFFLES:
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Sliced fresh strawberries or syrup

FOR THE ORANGE SAUCE:
- 2 cups of orange juice
- 2 spoons of sugar
- 1 piece of ginger
- 1 red chili

FOR THE DUCK:
- 1 duck leg
- 1 cup duck fat
- 1 clove of garlic

FOR THE ORANGE WEDGES:
- 1 orange

METHOD

Directions for the waffles
1. In a bowl, combine flour, sugar and baking powder. In another bowl, lightly beat egg yolks. Add milk, butter and vanilla; mix well. Stir into dry ingredients just until combined. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; fold into batter.
2. Bake in a preheated waffle iron according to manufacturer's directions until golden brown. Yield: 10 waffles (about 4-1/2 inches).

Directions for the confit duck
1. Cook the duck leg in the oil and garlic at low fire for 4 hours.
2. Once is soft and completely cook, remove from the oil, dry and sear in a hot pan. Reserve.

Directions for the orange sauce
1. Reduce in a casserole all the ingredients together until half, reserve in cold.
2. For the Orange segments, peel the orange and remove one by one all the segments, carefully to don't leave any white parts.

Chef's tip: *Confit is a process to where and ingredient is cook very slowly in low fire, ideally at 80 degrees Celsius, in the case of the duck being cooked in its own fat to add more flavour to the meat.*

Ridiculously easy

Super-crumbly mince pies - and no-roll pastry. **Orlando Murrin**'s definitive recipe, step-by-step

photographs DAVID MUNNS

Last Christmas I was invited on to *The Chris Evans Breakfast Show* on Radio 2 to explain the secret of my famous crumbly mince pies, and over 340,000 listeners rushed to *bbcgoodfood.com* to find the recipe. Here it is again, by popular demand, with new advice for customising the filling.

If you're used to making your own pastry, you'll be surprised no liquid is added to the mixture. This is what makes it so crumbly, and it means you can handle the pastry as much as you wish (and with warm hands!) without it getting tough and doughy. Don't try and roll this pastry out, it will fall to bits.

If you are a very impatient person, you may find patting the pastry into the tartlet tins a bit tedious. I suggest you relax and take your time – switch on the radio, perhaps.

If your tartlet tins have seen better days, butter them before using. This shouldn't be necessary with a non-stick, silicone tin.

Best mince pies ever

MAKES 12-18 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 20 mins **EASY** ❄ before baking

for the pastry
225g butter, diced
350g plain flour
100g golden caster sugar

for the mincemeat
280g mincemeat (see right)
1 egg, to glaze
icing sugar, to dust

1 To make the pastry, rub the butter into the flour, then mix in the caster sugar and a pinch of salt. Combine the pastry into a ball using your fingertips – don't add liquid – and knead it until it is crumbly but roughly holding together. You can use the dough immediately, or chill for later.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Line a 12-hole tartlet tin (or two if your tins are shallow) by pressing small walnut-sized balls of pastry into each hole pushing and pressing until the pastry goes all the way up the sides of the the tin. Perfect edges are not essential, as you can see in the picture. Divide the mincemeat between the pies.

3 Take slightly smaller balls of pastry than before and press out in the ball of your hand to make round lids, big enough to cover the pies. Top the pies with their lids, pressing the edges gently together to seal – you don't need to seal them with milk or egg as they will stick on their own. *The pies can now be frozen for up to one month.*

4 Beat the egg and brush the tops of the pies. Bake for 20 mins until golden. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 mins, then remove carefully (this is crumbly pastry) and place on a wire rack. To serve, dust with icing sugar. *Will keep for three-four days in an airtight container.*

PER SERVING (18) 234 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 7g • carbs 30g • sugars 15g • fibre 1g • protein 2g • salt 0.5g

Orlando Murrin, food writer and former *Good Food* editor, has run gastro-hotels in France and Somerset. @*OrlandoMurrin*





gf customise it...

Mincemeat – homemade or bought?

● There's nothing difficult about making your own mincemeat, and there are several recipes at *bbcgoodfood.com*. Once you've shopped for the ingredients, it's just a case of mixing, stashing in jars and leaving for a couple of weeks for the flavours to develop. (Even easier, I find, is to put it in a plastic box in the fridge.)

As for bought mincemeat, the most common faults are oversweetness and mushiness. Both of these can be overcome...

● To cut sweetness, add the zest of a lemon and orange, a small knob of fresh ginger, grated, and 1 tbsp brandy or rum.

● If the mincemeat looks mushy, stir in an eating apple, peeled, cored and grated, and a handful of dried cranberries.

Shoot director ELIZABETH GALBRAITH | Food stylist AMY STEPHENSON | Stylist VICTORIA ALLEN



Where did this recipe come from?

This pastry recipe was confided to me by an excellent cook from Newcastle, who called it 'German dough'. She told me that she had hot hands and could not make pastry – except for this version, which gets better the more you work it. 'It's so easy to make,' she declared, 'you can throw it at the wall'.

Some cooks panic because the mixture seems so crumbly, but the secret is to keep working it – not to add liquid. Rely on the warmth of your hands to bring the mixture together.

CAKE CLUB

Bake a snowman

Drippy cakes are one of the hottest trends in baking. This cake takes a little time but it's well worth the effort – and the kids will love helping with the decorating

recipe CHELSIE COLLINS ***photograph*** WILL HEAP

Malted milk melting snowman cake

We used a hemisphere tin to make the snowman's head (ours came from lakeland.com*). You can buy malt extract from health food stores or online.*

SERVES 25-30 **PREP** 1 hr plus chilling
COOK 1 hr 25 mins **MORE EFFORT**
❄ sponges only

For the sponges
500g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
500g golden caster sugar
10 eggs
200g plain flour
200g full-fat natural yogurt
460g self-raising flour
4 tbsp malt extract (or 2 tbsp vanilla paste)
1 tbsp full-fat milk (or 2 tbsp if using vanilla paste)

For the buttercream
400g unsalted butter, softened
700g icing sugar
2 tbsp malt extract (or 1 tbsp vanilla paste)
1 tbsp full-fat milk

For the drippy ganache
100g white chocolate
½ tsp vegetable oil

To decorate
30g black fondant
30g bright orange fondant
1 wooden dowel, cut the same length as the nose
2-3 giant chocolate buttons
2 white chocolate Mikado sticks, for the arms

You will need
23cm cake board
16cm cake board
squeezy bottle

1 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Grease two 20cm round cake tins and line with baking parchment. Heavily grease a 16cm hemisphere cake tin and stand on a ramekin on a baking sheet to hold it steady.

2 First, make the sponges. Using electric beaters or a tabletop mixer, beat the butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy. Pour the eggs in, one at a time, giving the mix a thorough beating before adding the next. If the mix starts to look curdled, add 2 tbsp of the plain flour. Beat in the yogurt.

3 Mix both the flours together, adding ½ tsp salt, and slowly beat into the batter, followed by the malt extract (or vanilla paste) and milk. Spoon half the mixture into one of the 20cm tins, and split the remaining half between the other 20cm tin and the 16cm hemisphere. Bake the smaller amount of cake batter in the 20cm tin and the 16cm tin for 1 hr, and the larger amount for 1 hr 20 mins or until a skewer comes out clean when inserted into the middle of the cakes. Cool in the tin for 10 mins before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely. *Can be frozen at this stage for up to three months.*

4 Meanwhile, make the buttercream by beating all the butter and half the icing sugar together using an electric whisk or tabletop mixer. Add the rest of the icing sugar once incorporated, followed by the malt extract (or vanilla paste) and milk. Set aside until ready to use.

5 To assemble, halve the largest 20cm cake horizontally so you are left with two equal-sized sponges the same size as the remaining 20cm cake. Put a blob of buttercream onto a 23cm cake board (or cake stand) and spread using a palette knife. Stick one of the sponges to the board. Spread a thick layer of buttercream on top of the cake and sandwich another sponge on top. Spread over another thick layer and sit the final sponge on top. Using a palette knife, coat the entire cake in a thin layer of buttercream and smooth the sides and top carefully, working around the whole cake, scraping off any excess icing. Chill in the freezer for 10 mins or in the fridge for 1 hr until set.

6 Meanwhile, put the hemisphere sponge on the smaller cake board and halve horizontally. Fill the middle with some buttercream, sandwich with the top and coat the entire cake in a thin layer of buttercream. Chill in the freezer for 5 mins or in the fridge for 30 mins.

7 Take the larger cake out of the freezer and coat in another layer of buttercream. Take care when covering this time, as you want a smooth finish to the cake. Running the palette knife under hot water helps smooth over the sides once it is coated completely. Chill again for 5 mins in the freezer.

8 Cover the hemisphere sponge with buttercream and smooth over with the palette knife. Carefully lift the hemisphere onto the centre of the cake (as the sponge has been frozen you shouldn't leave finger marks). Press down lightly to set on the buttercream. If there is a gap around the rim, use a small palette knife to fill in with any remaining buttercream. Chill for 10-15 mins.

9 Meanwhile, make the eyes and nose using coloured fondant. Roll the black fondant into two balls for the eyes, and five smaller balls for the mouth. Roll the orange fondant into a carrot shape. Leave to set and harden slightly while you make the drippy ganache.

10 Make the drippy ganache by mixing the chocolate and oil and microwaving for 30 secs, stirring and then giving it another 30 secs until melted. Transfer to a squeezy bottle, then pour down the edges of the round cake to create the melting snow effect.

11 To finish the cake, stick the eyes to the head using a little remaining buttercream. Poke the wooden dowel into the carrot nose, leaving some poking out to stick it to the face. Stick the five small black fondant balls for the mouth and the chocolate buttons down the front of the cake for buttons. Insert the Mikado sticks on either side for the arms. Bring the cake to room temperature before serving.

PER SERVING (30) 525 kcals • fat 28g • saturates 17g • carbs 63g • sugars 45g • fibre 1g • protein 5g • salt 0.4g

Food styling KATY GREENWOOD | Styling AGATHE GITS



Find more drippy cakes, such as banana & custard cake and malted chocolate drizzle & honeycomb cake, at *bbcgoodfoodme.com*.

HOMEMADE GIFTS

Make a recipe kit

Create a personalised present for a foodie friend – pack a pretty box or jar with all the ingredients they need for a special recipe

recipes SOPHIE GODWIN and MIRIAM NICE ***photographs*** WILL HEAP





Sourdough starter kit

500g bag organic rye flour
1-litre glass Kilner jar
muslin
wooden spoon

To use the kit Write the instructions, below, on the gift tag (or print out the handy PDF on our website).

1 Put 200g flour in the Kilner jar with 200ml cool water. Mix well, then cover with the muslin, leaving the lid off. Leave the mixture somewhere warm but away from direct sunlight for 2-3 days until it has swelled and is frothing with bubbles.

2 To 'feed' the starter, throw half of it away, then top up with 100g flour and 100ml cool water. Mix well and leave for two to three days more. Once the starter is puffy and foamy again, it is ready to use.

3 When making sourdough bread, use as much of the starter as your recipe calls for, then keep it in the fridge, 'feeding' it 100g flour and 100ml cool water every week. *Your starter will potentially last for years – it's the gift that keeps on giving!*

Gravadlax kit

1 orange
1 dill plant
small pot of black peppercorns
125g box of sea salt
500g bag of demerara sugar
small pot of coriander seeds
small pot of caraway seeds
a fishmonger gift voucher (to buy a 500g boneless piece of salmon)
pestle and mortar (optional)

To use the kit Write the instructions, right, on the gift tag (or print out the handy PDF on our website).

1 To make the cure for your gravadlax, zest the orange and roughly chop a large bunch of dill. Using a pestle and mortar, grind 1/2 tbsp peppercorns, then stir in 50g sea salt, 75g sugar, 1 tsp each coriander seeds and caraway seeds, and the zest.

2 Put half the dill on a large piece of cling film and place your salmon on top. Cover with all the cure and the remaining dill, then wrap tightly. Place in a dish with something heavy on top to weigh it down.

3 Leave to cure for 24-48 hrs, turning the salmon once, then rinse well and pat dry before serving. *Will keep in the fridge for up to three days.*



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family fun

Super cute penguin biscuits

A batch of these will make you everyone's favourite person. Give them as gifts, or serve them at a Christmas tea

recipe JULIET SEAR ***photographs*** WILL HEAP



Christmas gingerbread penguins

Decorated biscuits are not as difficult to make as you might think. This gingerbread recipe is a cinch, and you can buy ready-made coloured icing in supermarkets. By following the picture, you can create penguins with very little effort, and although the decoratation does take a while, if you get a production line going, it's not so bad, and is well worth the time. This recipe is for a big batch of biscuits, but you can easily halve the quantities to make fewer, if you like.

MAKES 28 **PREP** 2 hrs plus at least 2hrs chilling and overnight setting **COOK** 35 mins **EASY** V ❄ unbaked dough only

75g golden syrup
30ml orange juice
100g molasses sugar
1 tbsp ground ginger
½ tbsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
100g butter, diced
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
240g plain flour
to decorate
apricot jam, for sticking
500-600g black fondant icing or sugar paste
icing sugar, for rolling
300g white fondant icing or sugar paste
20g orange or yellow icing or sugar paste (or colour some white yourself)
red colouring and dust (optional)



1 Mix the golden syrup, orange juice, sugar, spices and vanilla in a pan. Heat, stirring regularly, over a medium-low heat until all the sugar is dissolved and everything is combined – don't let the mixture boil. Add the butter, and stir until melted and incorporated into the hot sugar mix.

2 Add the bicarb and whisk until fluffy and pale. Pour into a mixing bowl. Allow to cool slightly, then add the flour and beat on slow, or mix with a wooden spoon, until the mixture comes together and resembles an oily dough – it should be gloopy, pliable and runny, but will harden as it cools and sets.

3 Using a spatula, tip the dough onto two large pieces of cling film laid out in a cross, one on top of the other. Wrap up to seal, then chill in the fridge for at least two hours or overnight. *The dough can be made ahead to this stage and frozen for up to a month. Defrost in the fridge overnight, then leave at room temperature for 1 hr before kneading until pliable.*

4 Heat oven to 180/160C fan/gas 4 and line a couple of baking trays with baking parchment. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of around ¾ cm. Using a round cutter with a diameter of 6-7cm, stamp out little rounds and transfer to the trays, leaving a 1cm gap between each one. Bake for 12-15 mins until darkened and firm (see tip, right). Transfer to a wire rack and leave to cool.

5 Warm a tbsp of apricot jam with a little water until just boiling. Brush each cookie with the jam to aid sticking. Roll out the black fondant icing with a little icing sugar to a thickness of 2mm. Use the same round cutter as before to punch out little black circles, then stick them to the cookies. Use the excess icing to make two little wings for each cookie (keep some back to make the eyes). Roll the icing into 28 small balls, then halve each. Press a half onto the sides of each biscuit to make the wings.

6 For the chest and face detail, roll out the white icing to a similar thickness as the black. Stamp out a smaller round shape, then use your fingers to stretch out the top to create the face shape. Mould the tummy by pinching the icing in a little where the face joins the tummy. Stick the moulded white icing onto the black icing with a little water.

7 For the beak, mould tiny pieces of the orange icing into triangles. To make the feet, shape the icing into tear drop shapes (two for each biscuit), press a little to flatten, then make two indentations to create the flipper effect. Stick to the biscuits with a dab of water, the beak towards the bottom of the face, the feet just below the white icing.

8 For the face, make two small circles for each biscuit – either using a tiny polka dot cutter or making small flat discs –, then stick to the face. Add a small ball of white icing to each black circle to create a sparkle on each eye. Add a bow tie, if you like, with a small brush dipped in food colouring, and rosy cheeks using a little red dust colour with a paintbrush under each eye. Leave to set overnight, then wrap as gifts or serve.

PER BISCUIT 186 kcals • fat 3g • saturates 2g • carbs 38g • sugars 31g • fibre 1g • protein 1g • salt 0.2g

gf tip
To test for doneness, press the biscuits with your finger – the gingerbread should spring right back

Juliet Sear is a baking wizard and food artist. Her latest book, *Kawaii Cakes* (Dhs50, Hardie Grant), is out w @julietsear

Shoot director and stylist TONIA SHUTTLEWORTH | Food stylist JULIET SEAR

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BBC goodfood Middle East

test kitchen



Expert Christmas cooking advice from Food editor-at-large, Barney Desmazery

Ingredients in-depth: Dried grapes

A basic baking ingredient, these chewy, sweet dried grapes take a starring role in Christmas cakes, puddings and mince pies, but what's the difference?



Currants Made with reds grapes, these have a slightly burnt caramel flavour. Used on their own in British desserts like Eccles cakes and spotted dick, they're mixed with raisins in mince pies or Christmas cakes. Best used in baking rather than a snack.

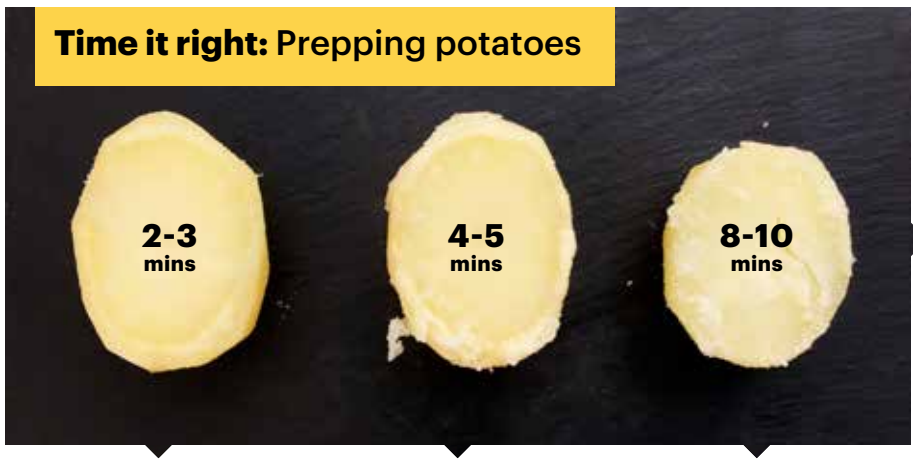


Raisins Produced using green grapes, raisins aren't dried as much as currants leaving them softer and ready to eat. Unlike currants, they soak up liquids and are often macerated in alcohol (think rum and raisin) before baking.



Sultanas Also known as golden raisins because of their colour, these are the largest, sweetest and juiciest of the three types of dried grape. Raisins and sultanas are interchangeable and can be soaked and cooked in the same way, but you can't supplement a currant for a raisin or a sultana.

Time it right: Prepping potatoes



Blanched These potatoes aren't cooked through so will hold their shape while roasting. These are the most forgiving if you've overcrowded the roasting tin, or you're moving it in and out of the oven.

Fluffy Boiling for 4-5 mins will give your potatoes a rough exterior, which will make them crunchy. At this stage, you need to be careful when roasting as they can break up when you turn them.

About to collapse For the most sensational roasties, boil until they're soft enough to mash. Drain gently, then leave to cool before carefully roasting. They'll need a decent layer of oil in the tin.

IN THIS MONTH'S TEST KITCHEN

- **The ultimate** dauphinoise
- **The essential** cheeseboard
- **Festive tips** and tricks



Quick fix

If a recipe calls for dried fruit to be soaked overnight and you're short of time, giving the fruit and liquid a quick blast in the microwave and leaving it to cool will do the same thing.



Perfect roasties

- A pinch of baking powder n the water makes it more alkaline, and makes the potato edges fluffy.
- Roasting cold cooked potatoes makes better roasties than using hot ones.
- Season the boiling water so you don't have to season the roasted potatoes at the end.

TEST KITCHEN

THE ULTIMATE DAUPHINOISE POTATOES

SERVES 8-10 **PREP** 30 mins
COOK 1 hr 10 mins **MORE EFFORT** V

photographs **PETER CASSIDY**

THE POTATOES

We tried lots of types of readily available potatoes and the two that performed the best for cream absorption – while still getting an edge that stayed crisp – were Maris piper and Desirée (red skinned) potatoes. Russet potatoes also performed well but aren't as easily available.



What: *The prince of potato dishes and an easy prepare-ahead side for a Christmas crowd. A true gratin dauphinoise should be nothing more than potatoes and cream baked until irresistibly golden and crisp around the edges. We've added some extras to give it a bit more character, too.*

How: *The best bit is the crispy edge, and we've made more of it by standing the potatoes on their side. We've kept the decadence and simplicity of the dish, but gone back to its French roots by adding a sour note of crème fraîche.*

SIZE MATTERS

For uniformity, buy your potatoes loose so they're all roughly the same size – about the size of your fist is perfect.

You will need

- 4 bay leaves
- bunch thyme
- 500ml double cream
- 500ml crème fraîche
- a grating of nutmeg
- 1 garlic clove, halved
- 50g butter, plus extra for the dish
- 2.5kg Maris Piper potatoes or Desirée potatoes, all roughly the same size, peeled

A WATCHFUL EYE

Keep an eye on how fast the dish is cooking and turn the oven down if you need to. When cream is over-cooked, it splits and creates a layer of buttery fat.

RELAX

Leaving the dish to stand for at least 10 mins gives the potatoes time to absorb the cream as it cools.

GARLIC

Overpowering raw garlic with cream can be sickly, so we've infused it in the cream and rubbed it onto the dish. This way, the strong flavour doesn't dominate the finished dish.

HERBS

Thyme and bay add fragrance, but they get in the way of eating when left in the dish. Here, we've infused them into the cream, so you get all the flavour without the woody stalks or leaves.



THE SLICE IS RIGHT

The potatoes can be hand-sliced, but for this ultimate version, they need to be uniform and thinly sliced. A mandoline is indispensable, but the slicing blade of a food processor or a good box grater would also work.

NUTMEG

A grating of fresh nutmeg is a classic with cream and potato dishes. It adds a subtle spice flavour, and also triggers nostalgic food memories of when nutmeg was used more often.

CREAM OR CRÈME?

We opted for the richness of double mixed with the sour note of crème fraîche, heated together to make one.

TWICE AS NICE

Any leftover dauphinoise can be pan-fried until golden, or used as a filling for a potato pie.

How to make it



1 Bash the bay and thyme, then put into a saucepan with the cream, crème fraîche, nutmeg and one half of the garlic clove. Season generously. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 2 mins. Set aside to cool and infuse.



2 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 6. Sprinkle the cut side of the remaining half of garlic with salt and use it to rub the inside of a large rectangular gratin dish. Lightly butter the dish. Melt the remaining butter in a saucepan.

3 Thinly slice the potatoes using a mandoline and stack them in piles. Tightly pack the stacks widthways in the dish, standing on their side use only as many as will fill the dish). Strain the warm cream over the potatoes, pressing down on the herbs as you do so. Bake for 1 hr or until the potatoes are cooked through and crisp on the top, brushing with the melted butter halfway through. Leave to cool for about 10 mins, then serve scooped straight from the dish.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING 670 kcals • fat 51g • saturates 33g • carbs 44g • sugars 4g • fibre 4g • protein 6g • salt 1.1g

HOW TO CUSTOMISE YOUR POTATO GRATIN

Here are some delicious deviations on a classic dauphinoise.

Jansson's temptation
Switch it to a Swedish potato bake by infusing a sprig of rosemary in with the cream and scattering the uncooked potatoes with 12 finely chopped anchovy fillets. Lovely with lamb.

Tartiflette
For an alpine alternative, scatter the unbaked potato with 200g smoked bacon lardons and 1 finely chopped onion. Bake in the oven, topping everything with 1 sliced reblochon cheese halfway through.

Boulangère
Swap the cream and crème fraîche for 750ml of hot chicken or strong vegetable stock. Bake under a joint of meat roasting on a rack to catch all the meaty cooking juices.

Shoot directors BARNEY DESMAZERY and PETER RüPSCHL | Food stylist ELENA SILCOCK | Stylist JENNY IGGLEDEN

ESSENTIAL KIT

THE ESSENTIAL CHEESEBOARD

We asked Patricia Michelson, dairy expert and founder of La Fromagerie, which cheeses should govern the board

Here's my list of cheeses based on what's best at this time of year. For a true cheese experience, I also suggest you eat them in this order

1

FRESH GOAT'S CHEESE

The lively acidity and bright appearance of a young goat's cheese is perfect to refresh the palate. Look out for lighter, crumbly styles, like the truncated pyramid Sinodun Hill from Norton & Yarrow cheesemakers with its fresh lemony zing and fudgy texture, or the classic French log Ste Maure de Touraine with its charcoal coat speckled with white moulds and fresh walnut flavour.

2

SOFT STYLE

A bloomy white-coated Brie, Camembert or Hampshire Tunworth with earthy wild mushroom aromas and rich grassy flavours are truly delicious. Another British soft cheese for this time of year is the Rollright from King Stone Dairy, with a mellow yeasty flavour and peachy hued rind from washing in brine. It's now made in a smaller size, so it's perfect for a family cheeseboard.

3

HARD CHEESES

To give body and bite, there's nothing to beat a Somerset cheddar like Keens, which is a real old-fashioned style, or Montgomery, which has elegant raisin and nut flavours. If you want to try something new, then Comte d'Estive from the Franche-Comté, a region that hugs the Swiss borders, has the style of a Gruyère but with the bittersweet flavour of dark chocolate.

4

BLUE

Stilton and the raw milk Stichelton cheeses are perfect at this time of year – mature with big bursts of metallic sharp blue notes running through the richness. Another blue is Roquefort, made from ewe's milk with intense powerful flavours and gritty texture. All great to relish with Port.

5

WILD CARD

For something different, look at Spanish cheeses like the spicy Picos de Europa blue which is wrapped in vine leaves to add fruity flavours, or the Sao Jorge cheddar-style hard cheese from the Azores with its sharp edge and persistent finish. There's also the Mont d'Or cheese from Haut-Doubs in the Jura, which can be baked in its box to turn it into a fondue.

LA FROMAGERIE

La Fromagerie began when Patricia Michelson bought a wheel of Beaufort in a farmers' market in Meribel. After selling the cheese from her garden shed, she graduated to a market stall, before opening her first shop in 1992. La Fromagerie is now three cheese shops and cafés, including the newly opened Bloomsbury site. Wholesale, they supply top chefs and restaurants across the UK.

lafromagerie.co.uk
@lafromagerieuk

How to cut cheese



Logs or cylinders: Cut into rounds about 2cm thick.



Pyramids or cones: Cut from the middle into tall wedges.



Whole small round cheeses: Portioned like a cake.



Wedges of hard cheese: Cut along into rectangles becoming thinner as the wedge gets thicker.



Wedges of blue cheese: Should be portioned from the middle for even distribution of vein.



Wedges of soft cheese: Cut into slices from the point.

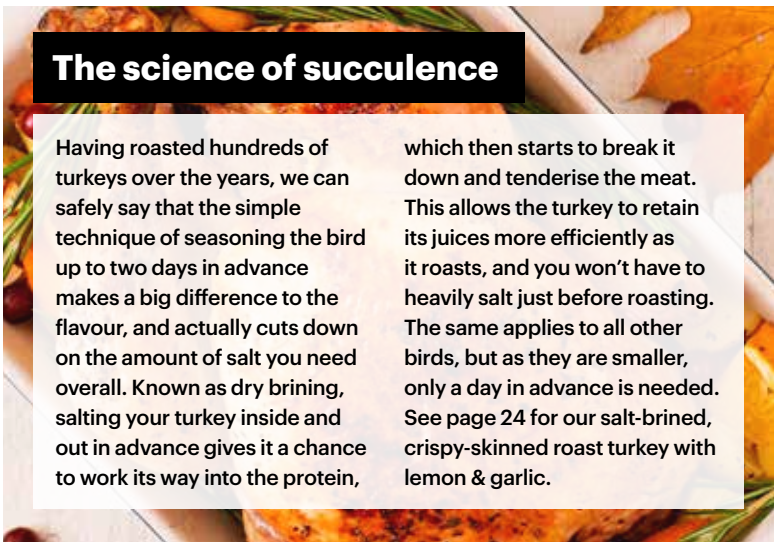


Runny cheeses in boxes: Should be served by the spoonful.

Illustrations GEORGE BLETSIS | Photographs EMMA BOYNS, GETTY IMAGES

TEST KITCHEN

FESTIVE TIPS & TRICKS

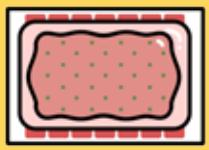


The science of succulence

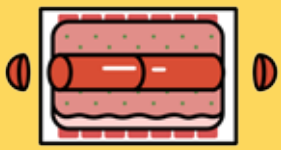
Having roasted hundreds of turkeys over the years, we can safely say that the simple technique of seasoning the bird up to two days in advance makes a big difference to the flavour, and actually cuts down on the amount of salt you need overall. Known as dry brining, salting your turkey inside and out in advance gives it a chance to work its way into the protein, which then starts to break it down and tenderise the meat. This allows the turkey to retain its juices more efficiently as it roasts, and you won't have to heavily salt just before roasting. The same applies to all other birds, but as they are smaller, only a day in advance is needed. See page 24 for our salt-brined, crispy-skinned roast turkey with lemon & garlic.

How to roll your turkey bombe

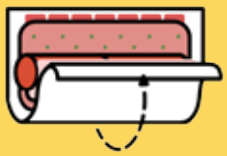
Step-by-step guide to assembling our turkey, bacon & chorizo bombe on page 69



1 Arrange the turkey, skinned side down, on the bacon. Pat the sausage mixture on top.



2 Trim the rounded ends off the chorizo and line them, ends touching, along the middle of the sausage meat mixture.



3 Use the edge of the baking parchment to lift and roll the bacon and turkey into a tight log.



4 Tie the bomb at intervals to keep it together, then wrap well in cling film and put in the fridge. It can be prepared up to this point two days ahead of cooking.

FROZEN ASSETS

Make the freezer your sous chef.

POTATOES, PARSNIPS & CARROTS
Can all be par-cooked in advance, then cooked from frozen on the day. Need to save on space? Freeze the vegetables on baking trays and transfer to bags once rock solid.

COOKED YORKSHIRE PUDDINGS
Can be frozen and simply reheated to crisp up at the last minute.

BREAD SAUCE & MAKE-AHEAD GRAVY
Can be made up to a month in advance.

FROZEN TURKEY ON CHRISTMAS DAY MORNING?
Don't panic – it is safe to cook your turkey from frozen. Simply allocate a 50 per cent longer cook time for a completely frozen turkey, and 25 per cent for one that's partially frozen, checking the internal temperature of the bird with a digital thermometer to make sure it's cooked through.

IT'S ALL IN THE PREP

A prep list of all the jobs you need to do to get dinner on the table will keep you organised even once the prosecco's started flowing. Turn to page 156 for our fill-in time plan.


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Set in the graceful, manicured surrounds of a private polo estate, Desert Palm Dubai challenges the stereotype of the towering city by introducing signature boutique chic to Dubai. Desert Palm Dubai officially opened on 28 March 2008 by Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, Wife of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE, Ruler of Dubai. The property is located on a polo estate, originally created as a haven for owner Ali Albwardy's personal enjoyment of polo, which features four polo fields, riding school, stabling facilities for over 300 horses and 90 residential villas.

The retreat features 38 chic guest rooms, suites and villas, a signature LIME spa, infinity pool, conference and banqueting centre, boutique fitness centre, landscaped gardens and spectacular views of the Dubai skyline. Guests can also enjoy an array of culinary experiences whether it's at the signature ASADO Grill restaurant RARE, the relaxed brasserie Epicure, the chic lounge RED bar or the outdoor POLO bar.

Desert Palm Dubai's guest accommodation includes 13 standalone Pool Residences located around two inner courtyards and offering complete seclusion, 6 top floor exquisite Palm Deluxe rooms and 7 beautifully appointed open plan Palm Suites with views over the main polo fields and estate grounds. Situated on the ground level, the 5 Polo Suites provides easy access to the main swimming pool and have a balcony overlooking the gardens and main polo field.

Desert Palm Dubai also features 4 one-bedroom Pool Villas with luxurious living with large indoor and outdoor living areas and private swimming pools, and two one bedroom Polo Villas overlooking the main polo field. LAYALI is an exclusive three-bedroom presidential villa, surrounded by lush grass, is a walled sanctuary, capturing the beauty and simplicity of the Arabian landscape.

For more information, see desertpalm.ae/en/.

The prize draw for a one-night stay for two at Desert Palm Dubai will be made at the end of December 2017. Prize certificate cannot be exchanged for cash, is not transferable, is not for resale. Booking in advance is required and subject to availability. T&C apply.

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to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

What is the name of Desert Palm's one and only massive three-bedroom villa?

*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

YAS FAMILY FITNESS FESTIVAL

UAE

دائـرة التـخطيط العـمراني والبلـديات
DEPARTMENT OF URBAN PLANNING AND MUNICIPALITIES
بـلـديـة مـديـنـة أبـوظـبـي
ABU DHABI CITY MUNICIPALITY

جـزيـرة يـاس
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GATEWAY PARK SOUTH, YAS ISLAND

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TO SEE THE SCHEDULE AND REGISTER FOR YOUR FREE TICKET
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Competition

WIN!

A **3-night stay at Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah,** worth **Dhs5,000!**

A three-night stay at the Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah in a Waldorf classic room with breakfast and a spa voucher

Inspired by the palaces of the Arabian Peninsula, Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah is one of the Emirates most luxurious resorts. Flanked by the Arabian Sea and Hajar Mountains, the resort includes a luxurious spa, 18-hole championship golf course and a 350m private beach.

With nine eclectic restaurants and lounges, the resort is the ideal destination for a mini getaway. This luxury prize includes three nights in a classic Waldorf room including a sumptuous breakfast in Qasr al Bahar and Dhs500 to spend in the Waldorf Spa.

The prize draw for a three-night stay at Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah will be made at the end of December 2017. Prize certificate cannot be exchanged for cash, is not transferable, is not for resale. Booking in advance is required and subject to availability.

Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com
to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

How long is the private beach at Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah?

*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO GO STRAIGHT TO OUR WEBSITE.

COMPETITIONS

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to gourmet goodies, up for grabs.



WIN!

A STAYCATION AT THE HOLIDAY INN ABU DHABI WITH BREAKFAST AND DHS200 TO SPEND AT SUSHISAN! WORTH DHS700

Spend a relaxing weekend at Holiday Inn Abu Dhabi. Spreading the #joyoftravel for all, this property looks forward to welcoming you into the comfort of its rooms while the team is ready to turn your stay into a most relaxing experience. Enjoy complimentary breakfast buffet and an Dhs200 voucher in SushiSan, the casual and licensed Japanese restaurant. In addition, you will receive full access to the hotel's pool, gym, steam room and sauna.



WIN!

A GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE AT ROSSO, AMWAJ ROTANA! WORTH DHS500

Enjoy a hearty 3-course dinner accompanied with a tasty bottle of grape beverage with a partner this season at Rosso Ristorante, Bar and Enoteca at Amwaj Rotana Jumeirah Beach Residence.



WIN!

A THURSDAY EVENING BRUNCH FOR 2 WITH HOUSE BEVERAGES AT BLU SKY LOUNGE & GRILL! WORTH DHS500

Due to popular demand, the Blu Sky brunch now takes place on Thursday evenings. Kick start your weekend with multi-servings of the best British pub grub. Enjoy sharing platters, fish and chips and traditional roasts alongside endless brews, spirits and grapes. Hit the dance floor to the tunes of our resident DJ Cliff Townley, who will keep the party moving into the early hours.



WIN!

DINNER AND DRINKS FOR 2 AT DA VINCI'S ITALIAN TRATTORIA! WORTH DHS500

Open since 1989, Da Vinci's was the third Italian restaurant to launch in Dubai and has flourished over the years, picking up numerous culinary awards, including "Dubai's Favorite Italian Restaurant" three times. A popular venue in the city serving vast selections of pizzas and pastas at very reasonable prices.



WIN!

A DINING VOUCER FOR ATISUTO JAPANESE RESTAURANT! WORTH DHS500

Atisuto, Dubai's very own Japanese restaurant group, is now closer than ever, with more branches opening across the city. Delectable dishes served up by master chefs from Japan include sushi, sashimi, yakitori, udon and ramen that are all prepared fresh on a daily basis.

The typically bustling Tokyo eatery can be found on the foodie lane behind Al Ghurair Centre in Deira; on Bay Square in Business Bay; in the Galleria Mall on Al Wasl Road, Jumeirah; and in the Persia Court of Ibn Battuta Mall on Sheikh Zayed Road.



WIN!

FAMILY BRUNCH FOR 4 AT GEALES, LE ROYAL MERIDIEN BEACH RESORT &SPA! WORTH DHS500

Win brunch for four at the Geales Saturday Family Brunch. Enjoy four courses of fabulous British classics, unlimited house beverages and sweet treats from the quintessentially British sweet shop, which features all of your childhood favourites. What's more, Le Royal Méridien's expert team are on hand to keep your little ones entertained all day long with face painting, kid's yoga, arts & crafts, a bouncy castle and much more.



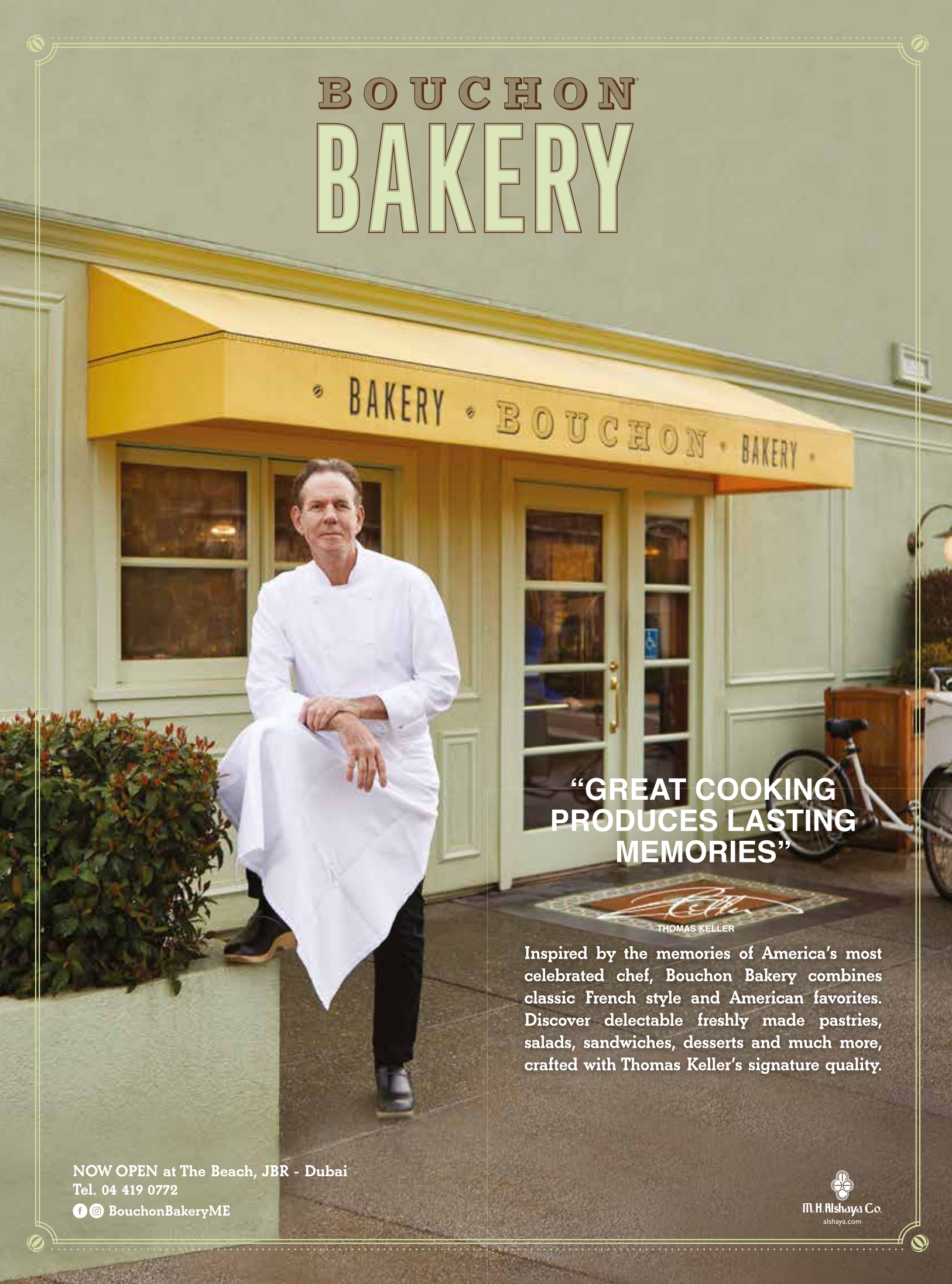
WIN!

A GIFT BAG OF CANDLES AND FRAGRANCED GOODIES FROM PEPERMINT GROVE AUSTRALIA! WORTH DHS500

Inspired by the opulence of grand old estates, stunning private gardens and heirloom antiques, Peppermint Grove Australia brings luxury and timeless sophistication to modern day contemporary living. Handmade in the exquisite Southern Highlands of New South Wales, Peppermint Grove Australia captures the remarkable beauty and exquisite charm of Australian living with their range of candles and diffusers. Each fragrance has been carefully created to encapsulate a unique part of the Australian landscape; its beauty and the memories and experiences they invoke.

To be in with a chance of winning these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.


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